

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

WEDNESDAY

10:00 A.M.

JANUARY 25, 2023

PRESENT:

Vaughn Hartung, Chair

Alexis Hill, Vice Chair

Michael Clark, Commissioner

Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner

Jeanne Herman, Commissioner

Janis Galassini, County Clerk

Eric Brown, County Manager

Nathan Edwards, Assistant District Attorney

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:00 a.m. in special session at the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Headquarters, 3663 Barron Way, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, County Clerk Jan Galassini called roll and the Board conducted the following business:

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Chair Hartung announced the Board would hear Agenda Item 7 first.

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23-0053 AGENDA ITEM 7 Public Comment.

Owner of SoL Cannabis, Ed Alexander, urged the Board to put forth a motion for reconsideration of the cannabis lounge item. He believed the necessity for the lounges in Northern Nevada was demonstrated by the outpouring of emails the Board received. He said there was an opportunity to put Northern Nevada on the map for cannatourism. He noted the State was in an interesting predicament because people were invited into the community and allowed to make cannabis transactions at a dispensary; however, those people were not given a place to legally consume. He stated there were no places for locals to gather with other like-minded individuals. He believed there was a misperception about what lounges could potentially look like. Currently, the industry had no place to provide live education for medical patients and industry representatives. He said there were medical patients he was trying to provide solutions for and help them use cannabis effectively; however, he was unable to demonstrate how to do that because he was unable to interact with live products. He said inebriated driving was discussed at previous meetings. His personal belief was that the presence of a lounge would not cause an increase in impaired driving. He said if there were truly concerns about inebriated drivers, then why had he not heard discussion about closing bars or places where alcohol was consumed in excess. He hoped the issue could be looked at from a Countywide

standpoint. He commented the issue had become about SoL Cannabis because it was the only dispensary that received a State license. SoL Cannabis had endorsements from Clark County Commissioner Tick Segerblom, the Cannabis Coalition, and the Nevada Cannabis Association, and hundreds of people voiced their support of SoL Cannabis to the County. He asked the Board to allow the process to move forward in a responsible, safe fashion. He thanked the Board for the work it did and said he was available for any questions.

Mr. Brian Kincannon thanked Mr. Alexander. He said he had prayed to God that morning and thought about how good he felt. He said he had not had a seizure in two months due to Mr. Alexander. He explained he had a grand mal seizure a year and a half ago and his wife thought he was dying in front of her. He had seizures all the time and was using cannabis as medicine because the medicine from the doctors did not work. He met with Mr. Alexander and told him about the problems he was having, and Mr. Alexander gave him a cannabidiol (CBD) pen. He explained that when he started having a seizure, he used the pen and the seizure went away instantly. He said the doctors had not helped him with his problems. He could now go to work and live his life. He thought if there were lounges, he would have learned about this relief sooner. Two months ago, he was throwing up repeatedly and laying in his own vomit because there was nothing he could do. He said his choices were to lay in bed and feel like he had been run over by a truck or smoke cannabis and feel normal again. He prayed that God softened the hearts of the Board members. He stated the product had saved his life.

County Clerk Jan Galassini stated emails received would be placed on file.

23-0054 **AGENDA ITEM 3** Announcements/Reports.

Vice Chair Hill said she went to the Katie Bug Boutique opening at the Our Place campus. She explained the boutique was created by the Katie Grace Foundation. She noted the foundation approached the County due to the good work the Human Services Agency (HSA) did setting up a boutique with brand-new clothes, accessories, and toys for children. Families at Our Place could shop at the boutique for free. The boutique was managed by the Wild, Whimsical Women, and all the toys and clothes were donated by Amazon, Walmart, and Bed Bath & Beyond. She recommended people research the Katie Grace Foundation. She noted the foundation had quickly put the boutique together, and it was an asset for the Our Place campus and normalized what children went through at the emergency shelter. She had heard from County Manager Eric Brown that the HSA was voted the best place to work for parents. She opined the Board should be proud of that, and she was excited about the work Human Resources was doing to ensure families could work at the County.

Commissioner Clark wondered why the Board was meeting at a different facility that was smaller and did not have the technology that Chambers had. He noted the facility was lacking many things and asked someone to explain why the meeting was held there. He addressed the comments made by Ed Alexander, owner of SoL Cannabis, and said at the previous meeting he voted to uphold the Planning Commission's decision. He did not vote based on Mr. Alexander's lounge, although that was the ultimate result. The

comments he made addressed the procedure to overrule or sustain the decision of the Planning Commission. He stated that was what he voted on. Since that time, he received hundreds of emails regarding the matter. He opined the issue was rushed through by the previous Board. There were a lot of questions he never had a good understanding of. He heard a lot about shuttles and how the process would work. He opined if a visitor smoked and got a ride somewhere, that was fine. If that person did not have a ride, he wondered how a visitor would figure out how to get around the County. He noted even locals often got lost in the County.

Commissioner Clark explained he did not normally believe in overturning a committee because those committees were appointed to serve; however, since his vote, he received hundreds of emails in support of SoL Cannabis. Since the vote, it had come to his attention that the ordinance was designed to apply broadly and would only license dispensaries in the County that received State licensing for a lounge. The only dispensary with State licensing was SoL Cannabis. He believed the Board was unprepared to address concerns from the public commenters, and he felt the owner of SoL Cannabis should have been present at the meeting. He noted the owner was unavailable on the day of the meeting. He said he spoke with the Sheriff the other day but needed to have further discussions with him. He needed to talk with the Air Quality Department (AQD) regarding the matter. He believed the health department needed to be present to make an informed decision that supported the business and provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax revenues to the County.

After speaking with Clark County Commissioner Tick Segerblom, Commissioner Clark said he wanted to reconsider the matter. He requested a motion be put on the agenda for reconsideration of the matter. He further requested the scheduling of a meeting where Mr. Alexander, as the applicant, could outline his vision for the cannabis lounge and discuss whether the County would benefit from the lounge. He wondered whether the County would benefit, or if Clark County would control and reap all the tax benefits. He apologized to the constituents that spoke at the meeting on January 17, but he believed another meeting was the only fair remedy because the applicant was not at that meeting. He asked Manager Brown why the matter was put on the agenda without the applicant in attendance. He believed the matter should be reconsidered and that a meeting or workshop should be held with those in support of the lounges and those opposing the lounges.

Chair Hartung said he had an opportunity to go to Governor Joe Lombardo's State of the State address. He noted there were some interesting comments made, and he was hopeful there would be a working environment in Carson City. The previous evening, he had an opportunity to go to Tesla. Tesla, he said, was expanding and adding a five million square foot facility. The investment was approximately \$3 billion. He noted there was a request for reconsideration and asked Assistant District Attorney Nathan Edwards to outline it for the Board.

Attorney Edwards said the request was for the item to be on a future agenda at a BCC meeting. He mentioned the next scheduled BCC meeting was February 14. Rule 7.2 was the rule on reconsideration in the Board's Rules of Procedure Handbook. As it was written, the person seeking reconsideration had to have been on the prevailing side of the motion. He noted Commissioner Clark was on the prevailing side of the motion. The rule also stated the reconsideration had to be requested at the meeting where the item was originally considered, or at the next regularly scheduled meeting. To satisfy the Open Meeting Law (OML), the item had to be placed on an agenda. Right now, he stated, it was a request for an item to be placed on a future agenda. Whether or not it was placed on an agenda in the future was an internal decision and not up to him. He advised a conversation should be held between Commissioner Clark, Manager Brown, and the District Attorney's (DA) Office if the Board needed input regarding legal parameters. He said the Board was not agendized to hear the matter or take a vote that day.

23-0055 **AGENDA ITEM 4** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' regular meetings of December 13, 2022, and December 20, 2022. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

23-0056 **AGENDA ITEM 5** Strategic Planning Process: This is a workshop item. The purpose of the Strategic Planning Workshop is to discuss and possibly give direction regarding strategic objectives for the current Fiscal Year 2023 and possible Fiscal Year 2024 objectives of the Washoe County Commission, which may include, but not be limited, to review, discussion and possible direction to staff regarding:

AGENDA ITEM 5A Review & discussion by the County Manager on Board of County Commissioners Rules of Procedures and general update to Emerging Priorities within the county with a focusing on: Accessibility & Equity, Infrastructure/Asset Investment, Homelessness & Mental Health, Election System, Sustainability, Retirement Contributions, Staff Classification Study, and Visioning & Planning for the Future.

AGENDA ITEM 5B An overview of the Washoe County Strategic Plan & Process to further discuss and possibly adopt changes to the strategic plan, including priorities for the county to pursue in carrying out objectives and duties.

AGENDA ITEM 5C An overview of the FY23 Strategic Performance Summary focusing on the design principles, differences between leadership plans, planning calendar overview and strategic plan structure and

definitions with specific area of focus on Fiscal, Economic, Innovative and Vulnerable Populations within the county.

Chair Hartung reminded that as Assistant District Attorney Nathan Edwards laid out, the Board would not discuss the cannabis issue that day because the Open Meeting Law (OML) did not permit it. He said the people wishing to discuss that item were welcome to stay for the meeting, but he wanted to clarify that the cannabis issue would not be heard that day.

Erica Olsen, Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of OnStrategy, welcomed the Board to the annual strategic planning workshop. She said County Manager Eric Brown would walk the Board through the Rules of Procedure.

Manager Brown conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk, and reviewed slides with the following titles: Commissioner to Staff Communications; Emerging Priorities. He requested the Rules of Procedure be distributed to the Board, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. He said the document was what Attorney Edwards had referred to. The Board created and continued to abide by a set of rules and procedures in terms of how the Board operated and how communication flowed. He would focus on Article 9.6 which dealt with Commissioner communications. He did not propose a change to the current rules of procedure, but he asked the Board to agree to abide by the rules going forward to ensure timely and efficient communication between the Board and staff. The rules asked the Commissioners to go through the County Manager or Assistant County Managers to request staff assistance or to give direction to appointed departments. Commissioners would go through elected department heads for any requests in their area of responsibility. Constituent requests could be directed through Washoe 311 or the Commissioner Support Team. He noted the Commissioner Support Team included Community Outreach Coordinator Candee Ramos, Community Outreach Coordinator Marc De La Torre, Program Assistant Alexandra Wilson, and Office Assistant II Bailey Falk. That team could be contacted regarding follow-up on constituent requests. He encouraged the Board to follow the procedure to ensure a request was logged into the QScend program which provided a record of when it was received and by whom. This would allow staff to ensure the request was executed.

Manager Brown discussed the two-hour rule which stated in no case should individual Commissioners give direction to or seek substantial staff assistance that would require more than two hours of one employee's time. He said the rule was put in place a few years ago to prevent situations where extraordinarily intensive data or research requests were issued to staff without full consideration of the Board. Those matters could be brought to the Board and placed on an agenda, and if the Board agreed to dedicate resources to address those issues, then the request could proceed. He advised the Board members to be cognizant of the two-hour rule.

Chair Hartung said his understanding of the process was that a Commissioner would ask for information at a meeting, staff would determine if the request would require more than two hours, and the request would then be placed on an agenda by

the County Manager and the Chair. He asked if the agenda item would simply be a request or if staff would speak about what it would require from them. Manager Brown clarified it would be a simple request. Chair Hartung said staff would not tell the Board why it would take them more than two hours.

Manager Brown stated he had not gone through Section 9.6 in its entirety but simply shared the item that had come to his attention. He observed that many of the department heads requested the provisions be enforced to reduce the amount of confusion and conflicting direction for them. Chair Hartung reminded the workshop was less formal and the Board did not need to go through him for questions. If a Board member had a question while staff was making a presentation, he asked that the Board member ask the question at that time. He thought it would help the flow of conversation.

Manager Brown addressed Commissioner Clark's comments regarding the location of the workshop. He explained over the past two or three years, the discussion was held off-site at the request of the Board. He opined sometimes a change of venue outside of Chambers led to an opportunity to think more strategically and broadly about the future of the County. He believed in the past two sessions County staff had come away from the workshops with a good sense of where the Board wanted to go. He noted that was the objective of the workshop that day. The form of the workshop was generally not for a lot of public comment or normal Board meeting items. He acknowledged there was a lack of Information Technology (IT) infrastructure.

Commissioner Clark said he had been to workshops with the County over the past eight years which were held at different locations; however, those workshops were not public meetings. He opined the workshop that day was a hybrid of a public meeting and a workshop. He noted there was limited seating and the parking was not conducive to what was needed. He did not understand why the meeting was a hybrid between a workshop and a meeting. He thought it should be either a workshop or a public meeting. He said the seating and parking were limited, the electronic backup was not available, and it was a lot of extra work for staff.

Chair Hartung asked Attorney Edwards to clarify why the Board could not just have a workshop. Commissioner Clark noted he had been to workshops with department heads that were held at locations such as the District Attorney's (DA) office and a library. Chair Hartung did not remember a workshop held at the DA's Office and noted he had been to workshops at the Red Hawk golf course and a number of other outside venues. Commissioner Clark recalled Ms. Olsen was present at the workshop held at the DA's Office. Ms. Olsen explained that post-COVID-19 (C19) the expectation was to broadcast meetings for accessibility purposes. She noted that was why staff worked hard to find a more casual place that allowed for a virtual meeting.

Chair Hartung asked Attorney Edwards to explain the legal requirements for the Board. Attorney Edwards noted he heard two observations. Commissioner Clark's observations were regarding meeting size and the availability and functionality of technology at the meeting location. Chair Hartung brought up the question of the

limitations on the Board's ability to meet for a workshop that was not a public meeting. He said the Board was limited due to the OML. One exception to the definition of a meeting, he said, was if the Board gathered at a social function where there was no deliberation on a decision regarding County business. The second exception was for attorney-client sessions with the DA's Office for advice on options and strategies regarding litigation with the County. The third exception was for training from the DA's Office regarding legal obligations. This, he explained, could be something like a training session put on by the DA's Office involving things such as the OML or Nevada ethics law. Outside of those three things, if the Board gathered to discuss County business and matters within the County's jurisdiction it would need to be agendaized as a meeting with public comment and supporting material.

Manager Brown said the other topic he wanted to address was that of the emerging priorities as listed in his PowerPoint presentation. A subset of those topics would be reviewed that day. Every year staff put together a list of topics based on input from the Strategic Plan teams. The list of topics was based on activities the Strategic Plan team was engaged in. The list was a result of what the Board saw as key priorities in the community, as well as what was heard from the Citizen Advisory Boards (CAB), homeowners associations (HOA), and businesses in the community. The list also came as a result of continued dialog with department heads. He read through the emerging priorities list and said the election system was a good example of a topic that had emerged over the last couple of years. County employees were very vocal about environmental sustainability because they saw it as an opportunity for the County to be a regional leader on the matter. He explained retirement contributions would not be discussed that day; however, the County did have some financial impacts to face in the year ahead regarding Washoe County, the Nevada Other Postemployment Benefits Trust Fund (OPEB), and the Public Employees' Retirement System of Nevada (PERS). As the County started the budgeting process, those financial impacts would have to be dealt with. The staff classification study would not be discussed that day but would come before the Board in the near future because it would have a significant financial impact on the budget. The County was finishing up its work with Korn Ferry to determine how the classifications should be adjusted.

Chair Hartung believed there was crossover in some of the areas Manager Brown discussed and wanted a better understanding for himself and staff of where this occurred. He said there was a crossover between infrastructure/asset investment and environmental sustainability and gave the example of the County treating wastewater in three different places. He said the County treated wastewater in Lemmon Valley, Cold Springs, and South Truckee Meadows. In terms of environmental sustainability, he thought the County should work towards an infrastructure and asset investment in treating the wastewater to the highest possible standard. Accessibility and equity crossed over into homelessness and affordable housing. He looked forward to receiving more information from staff regarding how the County would address the areas of focus, the depth to which they would be addressed, and the funding mechanism for each.

Ms. Olsen said some of the emerging topics and priorities would be discussed that day. She explained she would give an overview of the Strategic Planning process for the County, then Housing and Homeless Services Division Director Dana Searcy would give a high-level overview of the year-to-date performance. After that, the strategic topics of dispatch, sustainability, equity, the election system, and housing would be discussed in depth. Those, she explained, were the five big topics that staff wanted to get direction on that day. She noted the workshop was different from a normal Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting on purpose. She said staff would lead the conversation with a briefing, but the conversation should be 20 percent presentation and 80 percent conversation. Staff was looking to hear from each member of the Board about the general direction to take. The workshop was different from most BCC meetings because staff was not necessarily looking for a decision on the issues. After staff received general direction from the Board that day, the issue would return to the Board with more detail to make a formal motion. She noted the conversations that day would feel a bit undone, but that was on purpose. She said the cadence and rhythm were to spend time to get the Board's direction and input on a handful of really important future-impacting topics. She mentioned there were time blocks for each topic in an effort to move through all the content, but she hoped there could be a discussion that was not as formal.

Chair Hartung noted the last item Manager Brown opened was listed in the agenda as "for possible action." He asked Attorney Edwards if the Board needed to do anything. Attorney Edwards advised the Clerk would need to ask for public comment on Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5C. Those items could also be grouped into one item, as allowed under the agenda. He reminded that before a motion occurred, the Board would need to ask for public comment. Chair Hartung asked if the Board should make a motion because the agenda listed each item as "for possible action." He explained on other boards he served on, the attorneys would say "for possible action" was there in case the board wanted to take action, but action was not necessary. Attorney Edwards stated the Board did not need to take a vote on the individual items.

Ms. Olsen continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Design Principles; Difference Between; Planning Calendar; Strategic Plan Structure & Definitions. For each strategic topic, she would inform the Board of the time allocated, the outcome staff sought, and questions to lead the conversation. Staff would walk through the background of the topic and take feedback from the Board to create a plan for the Board to approve. She advised the Board not to be concerned with making a plan because staff would handle that work. She explained the County's Strategic Plan must be multi-departmental, have a regional impact, and have large investment requirements. She noted there were significantly more additional strategic efforts that happened in the County that were not part of the County's Strategic Plan because they were included in a department strategic plan. That day, the Board would work on a few items to stay focused and move forward. Over the years, the workshops were kept to a few critical topics to make the progress visible and to sustain the efforts. She reminded the workshop was about functional and cross-regional work and advised the Board to keep in mind that bigger was not better. Sometimes the County's Strategic Plan items crossed over into department strategic plans.

Ms. Olsen discussed the “Planning Calendar Overview” slide and said it showed the planning process that was in place. The left-hand side of the slide was grayed out because the County was currently in the middle of the plan. She noted stakeholder input was not provided every year. She said the process the County followed was robust and efficient. Where the County was currently in the process was the section under January. The strategic areas of focus were the topics Manager Brown shared earlier. The workshop typically happened in January and the feedback received informed the budget and was turned into a plan with the goal teams. The plan was then brought back to the Board for approval. After the approval of the Board, the teams built and executed action plans. Progress updates were given to the Board on a quarterly basis. She noted Ms. Searcy would give a quarterly update that day. Chair Hartung informed the Board members they could find that day’s presentation on their iPads.

Ms. Olsen mentioned there were four goal teams and those teams had cross-departmental representation. Based on the direction from the Board, the various items would go to the different goal teams for the teams to create goals and initiatives. After that, the Board could decide if the plan would be presented as part of a standing agenda item. She said it was up to the Board how much detail it wanted regarding the plans. Manager Brown noted that was an area that would require further discussion. He said the prior Board generally did not want the updates in the context of a regular BCC meeting. He said the current Board may decide to receive the updates in the BCC meetings or another forum to allow the Board to review the updates and provide input. He said staff was open to that.

Ms. Olsen discussed the Strategic Plan overview. She mentioned Ms. Searcy would highlight the four strategic objectives in her presentation. Within each objective, there were goals which were the “whats” and the cross-functional initiatives which were the “hows.” She explained the key indicators were performance measures. There was one goal team for each strategic objective.

Manager Brown reminded that Ms. Searcy was currently the head of Housing and Homeless Services, but prior to that, she was part of the professional projects group that dealt with Strategic Plan activities. He said Ms. Searcy did a great job in her previous role and made tremendous contributions to help the County get to where it was that day. He informed that Ms. Searcy would not be involved in the professional projects group anymore due to her new role in Housing and Homeless Services. He thanked Ms. Searcy for her efforts and said she would hand over her duties to the new Chief Financial Officer, Abigail Yacoben.

Ms. Searcy said there were four goal teams and many people were behind the work that was done by those teams. She was speaking that day to share the great work that was being done. She noted the performance report was a quarterly report that was sent to the Board and posted on the County’s website. The report was organized by each of the large strategic objectives and it listed the goals. She directed the Board’s attention to the lower right corner of the “Quarterly Strategic Performance Report” slide. She said the performance summary was broken down by the goals with the action items underneath. The initiatives were in red, and the slide showed each action item’s status and when action

would occur. She noted the status of all four goals was generally on target; however, a couple of different components were off target or may need additional support. Staff checked each quarter to make sure they were moving forward towards the goals and to ensure they had the needed direction and resources.

Ms. Searcy said the accomplishment section was not included in the Board's report because she wanted to share it publicly. The accomplishments recognized key milestones that were met for outcomes from completed work. The Fiscal Sustainability Team, led by Budget Manager Lori Cooke, completed a five-year General Fund forecast and was working on requested information for the new budget management software that would be implemented soon. The team was also working on pilot designs for the Future of Work. The Future of Work, she reminded, involved how flex time and remote work translated into the office while ensuring employees were still available for constituents. The Economic Impacts Team, led by Planning and Building Division Director Kelly Mullin, added over \$4 billion in overall assessed value and was in the early drafting process for the Master Plan policies. The technology infrastructure assessment was completed, and the team was in the preliminary phase of the groundwater and water quality work in Cold Springs.

The Innovative Services Team, led by Communications Director Nancy Leuenhagen and Chief Information Officer Behzad Zamanian, dealt with a lot of public meetings happening through the nine CABs. The Commissioner Support Team was implemented and had established an enormous amount of work over the past year. Ms. Searcy explained the team did a lot of work on an SAP assessment for the implementation of a new budget and financial system. The team was doing a pilot study for the Future of Work at the Human Services Agency (HSA) at the 350 South Center Street building. The study involved research about the future of office space.

The Vulnerable Populations Team, which Ms. Searcy said was her new role, was focused on the Cares Campus over the past year but would see a transition back to the cross-departmentalist, as foundations were laid there. The team, along with the regional partners, permanently housed over 500 people in the past 6 months. Those people came directly out of the Cares Campus shelter and the Safe Camp. The County was awarded \$21.9 million in funding for the Cares Campus permanent supportive housing (PSH) project. The County purchased the five-acre Reno Housing Authority (RHA) property at the Cares Campus for housing. She explained the developer the County was working with was awarded approximately \$16 million from Home Means Nevada for that project.

Regarding the Fiscal Sustainability Team, Manager Brown pointed out that when the County started budgeting it had a five-year forecast. Staff looked not only at the fiscal year starting in July but towards the future. He noted some of the impacts he spoke about previously, such as OPEB, PERS, and the compensation survey probably would not impact the County for 2024. He opined it was the outyears the County had to be concerned about to ensure it had a structurally balanced budget. The five-year forecast was a very big part of the budgeting process but was not usually talked about in the budget presentation to the Board.

Chair Hartung asked if the five-year forecast included any federal dollars. Manager Brown asked if Chair Hartung meant grant dollars. Chair Hartung asked if the County was making any assumptions about those dollars and Manager Brown responded yes. He noted most of the exercise of the five-year forecast was related to staffing because that was worse. Chair Hartung wanted to ensure the County was not basing its programs on possible dollars coming into the County. He felt that was essential. Manager Brown agreed but said there were certain organizations, such as the HSA and the Sheriff's Office (WCSO), that received multi-year grants. He noted those were built in and if something were to interrupt one of those major grants, staff would have to adjust the forecast. He said the County did not make speculative decisions. Chair Hartung commented he looked at grants as bonuses that allowed the County to do things for a period of time, and after that period of time, staff would have to figure out how to proceed. He opined it all came down to sustainability.

Ms. Olsen explained that what Ms. Searcy presented was an example of what would come to the Board quarterly, as a formal presentation or not, depending on what the Board desired. That information was how staff kept themselves on track and kept the Board informed of the progress made against the priorities that were set. Regarding fiscal sustainability, Chair Hartung said he spoke with Manager Brown regarding his concern about the homeless population and how the County would pay for that going forward. He wanted to ensure it was funded properly in a sustainable way. He wanted to make sure the County was not in a difficult situation it could not get out of. Manager Brown said he understood.

Manager Brown asked if it was time to close out Agenda Item 5, and Ms. Olsen responded yes. Chair Hartung asked if Attorney Edwards wanted a vote from the Board on Agenda Item 5A. Attorney Edwards clarified that Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5C were heard. Manager Brown affirmed that was correct. Attorney Edwards requested public comment be opened for Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5C.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Oscar Williams spoke regarding Agenda Item 5A. He was concerned there was an erosion of voter confidence and trust in the elections and the people who ran them. He explained there was an 11 percent drop in active voter registration from August 2021 to August 2022. He thought the statistics defied logic because the population was booming. He found it strange that from October to October, inactive voters almost doubled. He said it was known that the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) did not remove dead voters. He noted that over 30,000 voters died each year and ERIC did not remove them. He said Deputy Secretary of State (SOS) for Elections Mark Wlaschin stated dead people had to stay on the voter rolls for two federal election cycles. He believed the process created problems and added to the lack of transparency and voter confidence. He noted he had a large list of things to suggest but would keep it simple. He explained Arizona used a method of voting in-person where the vote was cast on a machine and the ballot was printed. The voter then placed their ballot in the tabulator which counted the vote. He suggested the County adopt a similar system because he felt the current system was bifurcated and unconstitutional. He said there needed to be a Statewide standard and wondered what the standard was if there were paper

and digital ballots. He opined a paper ballot would give consistency to the County's methods and processes, including the count. He said a proclamation should be made to make Election Day a holiday. He felt that change would have bipartisan support.

Commissioner Garcia made a motion for Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5C. Vice Chair Hill seconded the motion. Attorney Edwards asked if the motion was to give direction to staff based on the comments given. He asked that the motioner specify the motion and the seconder agree with that. Vice Chair Hill said she thought the Board was accepting a report for this item. Chair Hartung agreed and opined the Board had not given direction to staff. Attorney Edwards stated the motioner needed to specify if the motion was to accept the report, give direction to staff, or both. Commissioner Garcia amended the motion to move to accept the reports given on Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5C. Vice Chair Hill seconded the motion.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Vice Chair Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5C be accepted.

23-0057 **AGENDA ITEM 6** Washoe County Strategic Planning Priorities: including but not limited to possible direction to staff, on the following matters:

23-0058 **AGENDA ITEM 6A** Regionalization of Emergency Services: Discussion and updates related to critical issues and possible improvements to dispatch, emergency medical services, and fire services.

Chair Hartung asked how Agenda Item 6A could be heard since the Board was not acting as the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) board that day. Assistant District Attorney Nathan Edwards said he looked at Agenda Items 5 and 6 very similarly because the headings on both included possible direction to staff. He advised the Board could give general direction to staff on the topics, for example, exploring different avenues of regionalization of emergency services. He stated that did not mean the Board could unilaterally implement those decisions that day without the other stakeholders involved in the process, such as the Cities of Sparks and Reno, the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA), and the fire districts. Chair Hartung asked if the Board could give direction to the TMFPD if it was not convened as the TMFPD board. Attorney Edwards opined the Board could give direction to staff about how to pursue or not pursue different objectives. Chair Hartung stated he wanted to ensure it was okay to proceed because the County was in a very different scenario than the Cities of Sparks and Reno. He said the cities could discuss fire issues because they did not have a fire district. Attorney Edwards confirmed that was correct.

Erica Olsen, Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of OnStrategy, explained staff was looking for general direction with an understanding it would come back to the Board at a formal meeting for any specific action. She said Agenda Item 6A was originally slated for 15 minutes; however, she believed the item would require 30 minutes.

She mentioned the purpose of the item was to provide an update on the regionalization of dispatch, emergency medical services (EMS), and fire.

County Manager Eric Brown continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Core Principles and Project Outcome; The Current 911 System is Ineffective and Inefficient (2 slides); Regionalized Issue Needs Regionalized Solution; Regionalizing the 911 Process; Establishing Guiding Principles; Initial Priorities; High Level Work Plan; Regionalization of Dispatch/EMS/Fire Working Group Members.

Manager Brown reminded that at the concurrent meeting held in July, the Cities of Sparks and Reno and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) authorized the managers from the Cities of Sparks and Reno and Washoe County to work towards identifying a solution for the regionalization of dispatch, fire, and EMS. He explained he would spend a few minutes reviewing what was presented at the concurrent meeting to refresh the Board member's memories. He would then give an update on what had transpired since the concurrent meeting and receive input from the Board regarding the next steps. The three jurisdictions were working with the stakeholder agencies, which included the TMFPD and REMSA. He noted the slides were pulled from the concurrent meeting held in July. There was a general recognition that the current system was ineffective and inefficient. Specifically, there were duplicative efforts and resources between the TMFPD and REMSA. Although law enforcement was included in the scope of work, it was not the focus operationally in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. This was done in an effort to include law enforcement under the same banner as the regionalization of dispatch so it did not miss out on the opportunity for efficiencies and cost savings.

Chair Hartung reminded REMSA was a private entity and said regionalizing dispatch for public entities like the Sheriff's Office (WCSO), the TMFPD, and the Cities of Sparks and Reno was an easier process. He acknowledged REMSA had a franchise agreement with the Washoe County health district and wondered how an agency like REMSA could be forced to participate. Manager Brown said REMSA staff was involved in the discussions and proactively indicated they were willing to explore options for regionalization. The truth, he explained, was that REMSA could not survive financially the way it currently operated. He said it did not get a lot of public attention, but the cost of transporting patients from wherever they were to the hospital was not covered by insurance. There were many members of the public who were uninsured and REMSA did not get reimbursed for any costs if it did not transport patients. Any trips REMSA made to the Cares Campus or the Senior Center did not get paid for if REMSA did not carry the patient to a medical facility. He noted Chair Hartung pointed out one of the glaring challenges the region needed to tackle, which was figuring out a sustainable funding model for REMSA. He opined the outlook for REMSA within the next three to five years was that it would either go away or the County would need to find a way to fund it. Chair Hartung said that issue was not specific to Northern Nevada. He thought all emergency medical transport was having problems with funding sources. Manager Brown agreed but said REMSA was a different situation. In his years with the California Telehealth Network, he saw that in

most regions the ambulance carriers were a part of the health systems or a county organization like the county fire department. Chair Hartung said those ambulance carriers were public, not private entities. Manager Brown said REMSA was a standalone agency and that made it a little different financially than what was the norm around the Country.

Commissioner Herman recalled the County had some form of regionalization in the past and there were problems with it. She wanted a promise that regionalization would be researched carefully this time, and the County would work cautiously to get this done. She said the County could not afford to make mistakes this time. Chair Hartung asked if Commissioner Herman was referring to the contractual arrangement the County had with the City of Reno to provide fire services. Commissioner Herman believed it had been an agreement. Chair Hartung said that was a contractual arrangement and facilities were not combined. The County contracted with the City of Reno to provide fire services. Commissioner Herman wanted some kind of warranty that the County would not jump into something that was not fully thought through. She wanted something perfect that worked for everybody, especially the public. Manager Brown said perfect was a tall order. Commissioner Herman said she wanted something that worked very well and advised the County to take its time on the matter. Manager Brown said he understood Commissioner Herman's comments; however, the project had been deliberated for years. Just in the past three years he had been with the County, there were endless discussions between the parties. He did not believe anyone could accuse the agencies of rushing into anything. He said his presentation would outline the steps the agencies were taking, which involved researching best practices around the Country to ensure the action made sense for all parties involved.

Manager Brown noted 911 call takers and dispatchers in different dispatch organizations were frustrated because they were on different computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems and the systems did not communicate with each other. He said there was a broad agreement that what the agencies were doing now did not work and it took too long to get the initial calls to the right agencies. He noted the map on the "Regionalized Issue Needs Regionalized Solution" slide showed the fire station locations in the three jurisdictions. He opined regionalizing the 911 process would result in a better customer experience, more efficient use of resources, and better outcomes. He said the agencies spent a lot of time over the last six months focused on the outcomes they wanted to improve. He mentioned that prioritizing the user experience referred to how quickly an agency could get to the scene of the incident and how to minimize unnecessary time resulting from calls bouncing around between dispatch organizations. Chair Hartung asked if that assumed the County had a mutual and auto aid agreement with all of its regional partners where the closest unit was dispatched regardless of the jurisdiction. Manager Brown stated that was the desired outcome; however, it was not what the Board was discussing that day. Chair Hartung understood but said that was where there were some issues in the past because it was not simple to get all parties to agree on mutual and auto aid.

Manager Brown explained the group working on the project was focused on the four pillars shown on the "Establishing Guiding Principles" slide. Governance was important in terms of how the implementing organization operated. The group needed to

research if the answer would be a change of organizations or the sustainment of the organizations that were already in place. He opined many people would hear regionalization and think the County was putting the TMFPD and the Reno Fire Department (RFD) back together. He said that was not necessarily the case nor the intention of regionalization. The goal, he explained, was to get to the desired outcomes and how that would be achieved. He addressed the comment Chair Hartung made previously about how to fund operations going forward. There was a reimbursement available to communities called the government emergency management transportation (GEMT) grant. This was a federal grant that was available for ambulance services. He explained that because of the County's configuration it was not optimizing its access to those monies. An outside consultant was hired to better understand what other municipalities and regions were doing to access those funds. This would give the group a more specific financial handle on the upsides of regionalization.

Manager Brown said there was a broad agreement to make dispatch the initial focus because if that piece was not right, it could cause a lot of other problems to manifest. A CAD solution was selected and in December staff sent a letter of intent to start contract negotiations on behalf of the region. He noted that while that may not seem like much, it was a tremendous accomplishment because the regional partners agreed to use the same platform. Currently, the agencies were not using the same platform which resulted in delays in getting calls routed correctly. He said Technology Services IT Manager Quinn Korbolic was the center of that process. With that step taken care of, staff was now researching the governance issues regarding dispatch. It was decided a couple of weeks prior that the County would be the lead agency in the contracting process for the CAD platform. All agencies agreed it was necessary to preserve the individual capabilities of the jurisdictions to ensure their needs were met. This was a result of lessons learned from other regionalization efforts, such as those the County worked on with Accela. Although the County took the lead in negotiating the agreement for the CAD platform, the other agencies should not have to contact the County to get CAD change orders processed. Chair Hartung asked if the selected CAD platform currently existed in the region. Mr. Korbolic stated it did not.

Manager Brown informed Federal Engineering was selected as the overall project facilitator and consultant. The group agreed an independent third-party facilitator was needed to handle the contentious issues, such as governance and cost-sharing. He noted the group got off to a rocky start with Federal Engineering because the company was hired in October and the group was not able to get started as quickly as it hoped due to changes on Federal Engineering's account team. He noted the project was not moving as quickly as the group had hoped. The data-gathering process was completed in the first week of January. That process involved the stakeholder agencies submitting information regarding what they were currently doing and what sources of revenue they were accessing. The onsite visits would begin the following week and he intended to sit in on as many of those visits as possible. He opined it was very important to understand where the opportunities were to move forward and what the agencies were doing alike and differently. Based on the amended work plan from Federal Engineering, he thought he would be able to return to the Board with an update and recommendations sometime in late February or early

March. He opined the dispatch piece of the project might require further discussion. Chair Hartung asked for clarification of what onsite meant. Manager Brown said Federal Engineering would spend a day with the groups involved, such as the TMFPD, the RFD, and the WCSO. Chair Hartung asked if Federal Engineering would go to the REMSA dispatch center off Edison Way. Manager Brown replied it was on the list of locations. Chair Hartung asked about the dispatch center at the airport. Manager Brown was not sure if Federal Engineering would be visiting that location; however, that location was part of the stakeholder group.

Manager Brown reviewed the “Regionalization Working Group Members” slide and noted there were approximately 40 agencies on the list. He said most of the heavy lifting would involve REMSA, the TMFPD, the RFD, and the Sparks Fire Department (SFD). Vice Chair Hill pointed out she did not see the Washoe County Employees Association (WCEA) on the list. She believed the association represented some of the people involved. Manager Brown informed there were union representatives from the TMFPD and the participating agencies. Vice Chair Hill asked if the WCEA could be added to the list because it represented dispatch. Chair Hartung said the WCEA represented dispatchers. Manager Brown asked if the Board was still in favor of the regionalization approach. He acknowledged he did not give specifics in terms of what regionalization would look like or how it would be funded. Vice Chair Hill thought Manager Brown was doing a great job and she appreciated him taking the lead on the project. She opined it was important for the region and directed staff to continue forward and keep the Board apprised of the next steps. She was glad an outside arbitrator was brought in to help make the best decisions. Chair Hartung asked if the agency missing from the list needed to be added to the motion. Attorney Edwards said when a motion was made for Agenda Item 6A, it could be stated along the lines of direction to staff in accordance with the comments given during this session.

Manager Brown informed there had been discussions with REMSA and some of the other agencies about developing another form of the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) to manage the dispatch piece. Chair Hartung asked if Manager Brown was referring to the TMWA management model. Given Chair Hartung’s experience with the organization, Manager Brown asked him to explain how TMWA worked.

Chair Hartung explained TMWA was a merger between a number of groups. It was a merger between the Cities of Sparks and Reno and the Washoe County Department of Water Resources (WCDWR). He said TMWA was a very different kind of agency because, for the most part, it served everyone, with the exception of those on private or domestic wells and the private water companies in the region. TMWA was touted as having a very good system of management. That was proven by TMWA consistently placing in the 90th percentile in approval ratings from customers. He noted it was rare across the Country to see an agency whose customers were happy about the way it managed debt, the quality of the product it delivered, and how it delivered the product. He said TMWA had its problems, but no agency was perfect. TMWA was a regionalized service that was put together because it had been a privatized service handled mostly by Sierra Pacific. Manager Brown opined the point Chair Hartung was making was that TMWA

could be a viable model to study as the regionalization moved forward, specifically regarding EMS. Chair Hartung believed the parallel Manager Brown was making with respect to TMWA was that it started out as an agreement between the Cities of Sparks and Reno. The cities agreed something needed to be done about the water services or the services that were privatized by one company could be fractured. The County was in agreement with the cities, but the smallest details mattered when it came to the plan to merge. He opined there were lessons to be learned from TMWA.

Vice Chair Hill thought there was a value of understanding that the region decided water should be held by government entities. She opined it sounded like the values moving forward were that dispatch should be handled by government entities. Chair Hartung said possibly even emergency medical transport. Vice Chair Hill thought that should be part of the discussion. Chair Hartung felt TMWA was a model worthy of discussion. He asked to see other models across the Country that used the same governance model to see what went right and wrong. Manager Brown said the team had already received some of that information from Federal Engineering and assured he would return to the Board to share that analysis.

Chair Hartung observed he had a friend who passed away due to the current model the County was using. He explained Pyramid Highway was in a best-effort zone and his friend died in 2004 due to a massive heart attack because REMSA could not get to him for more than 45 minutes. He noted the fire service did what it could, but it was a very different fire service at that time because it did not have paramedics. He believed it was RFD that responded and said it was not a slight to the fire service. He was pleased with the improvements to fire services in Spanish Springs because there was now someone stationed out there. He believed that demonstrated its effectiveness and said it was embraced by the community.

Commissioner Garcia thanked the TMFPD for hosting the workshop. She was excited and supportive of the progress made regarding regionalization. She noted constituents did not necessarily care who took the call, they just wanted to see that people were being attended to in a timely manner. She thought the public would appreciate the savings of tax dollars. Regarding the government emergency management grants, she asked what prohibited the County from accessing financial opportunities to strengthen and bolster what was already being done. She noted the presentation did show a timeline moving forward and asked for more information about what the Board could expect. Chair Hartung stated the GEMT was not a grant, but a reimbursement. He thought it might be something that could be discussed at the TMFPD board meeting. Manager Brown said Chair Hartung was correct that those were reimbursements. Chair Hartung said it was a different model and noted it was unfortunate the Board was not convened as the TMFPD board so it could look at the reimbursements in a cross-board fashion.

Manager Brown said he misspoke the name of the reimbursement and informed that the correct name was Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT). He indicated the biggest reason the County was not optimized was that REMSA could not participate since it was not a government agency. He said the business model that needed

to be created for sustainability would involve researching what money was available for reimbursement and taking advantage of opportunities to lower costs for delivering services. This, he explained, was why the group sought help from a third-party. He noted the third-party worked with over 300 other jurisdictions with the same issues the group faced. He said the “High Level Work Plan” slide provided a high-level view of the work. He informed the site visits would take place over the next couple of weeks and a recommendation would be provided to the Board in early March. He acknowledged Chief Charles Moore and the TMFPD team for their help with the matter. He said Chief Moore had been very gracious with his time. He commented that he, Chief Moore, and REMSA met almost every week to review regionalization issues and other additional issues the region faced.

Ms. Olsen proposed the Board break for lunch if there were no more comments from the Board. Vice Chair Hill wanted the lunch break to be quick to ensure the Board had time to discuss the housing issue. Ms. Olsen proposed a 30-minute lunch break.

There was no public comment on this item.

11:42 a.m. **The Board recessed.**

12:17 p.m. **The Board reconvened with all members present.**

23-0059 **AGENDA ITEM 6B** Sustainability: Determine areas of focus for the county’s operational emission reduction and discussion on NZero and the potential impact on creating efficiencies in the county’s fleet, to include overview, history, target setting, and early insights for tracking.

Erica Olsen, Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of OnStrategy, continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the “Discussion Topics” slide. She said Technology Services IT Manager Quinn Korbolic would lead the conversation regarding sustainability. The outcome staff sought was to determine the areas of focus for emission reduction. She said Mr. Korbolic was the co-lead for the Innovation Services Team, along with Communications Director Nancy Leuenhagen. The conversation would be about sustainability-specific outcomes.

Mr. Korbolic continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe Resilience; Brief History; GHG Emission Reduction Target Setting; Our GHG Tracking: Early Insights. He explained he ran the Regional Services Division of Technology Services. The Regional Services Division managed the public safety radio system, geographic information systems (GIS), and was involved in the regionalization of the 911 system, specifically the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system. He said the approach towards sustainability at the County was staff-initiated. The team was passionate about implementing a sustainability plan and researching what that would look like in the future. Over the past couple of years, the team worked to ensure sustainability was added to the Washoe County Strategic Plan. He noted the Washoe Resilience Plan was in its early stages. The first step was to look inward and find operational efficiencies to

reduce energy usage, resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions in the organization. The goal, he explained, was to ultimately participate with other community agencies to make the County more resilient and sustainable now and for future generations.

Mr. Korbolic said the “Brief History” slide was a list of actions the County and State had taken since 2008 to advance sustainability goals in their organizations. He noted there were many things the County did that were not listed on the slide. The team had put forth large efforts regarding water reclamation, energy efficiencies, and fleet management. Those could all be characterized as sustainability. He felt the team was of the same mindset as Chair Hartung, due to Chair Hartung’s earlier comment regarding water reclamation. Chair Hartung mentioned he and Vice Chair Hill recently toured a treatment facility in Southern California. That treatment facility’s final expansion would process 130 million gallons per day of highly treated purified water. He said the County had a lot to learn from neighboring communities regarding sustainability.

Mr. Korbolic explained the State had made efforts since 2019 to address sustainability and the climate by adopting legislation. Senate Bill (SB) 254 required the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (NDCNR) to provide an accounting of greenhouse gas on an annual basis. The State also started an initiative to address climate change. That initiative set goals for the State regarding reducing greenhouse gas emissions. He noted the County was beginning to take similar steps as the State. In 2021, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved a partnership with nZero to start measuring operational greenhouse gas emissions. Climate action and resiliency was added to the Strategic Plan in 2021. In 2022, the public portal for greenhouse gas emissions was launched, and the BCC approved funding for a Sustainability Manager position. He expected that position to be filled soon which would help the program continue to move forward. Much of the work the team had done so far was about setting a strong foundation for making decisions about how the County wanted to move forward regarding sustainability efforts.

One of the decision points, Mr. Korbolic stated, was about setting targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions. The “GHG Emission Reduction Target Setting” slide showed a step-by-step process of things the team had done and the next steps. Mr. Korbolic said a greenhouse gas emission reduction program in the organization could encourage innovation, improve employee morale, and help with recruiting and retention. The program would have increased attention from senior management, which could potentially free up resources for greenhouse gas emission reductions. He explained a greenhouse gas emission reduction program often led to the identification of additional reduction targets, such as the reduction of waste or water. He opined if the County was going to set one target, it might as well set additional targets. Through the partnership with nZero, the County started steps 1, 2, and 3 on the “GHG Emission Reduction Target Setting” slide. Data was collected and the team had two full years of data from 2021 and 2022. The development of the Greenhouse Gas Inventory Management Plan was mostly complete. He explained the management plan was a documentation and accounting for the first two steps. The management plan had been written down, but it was not a formal plan yet. The next step in the process was to set the target, which was step 4.

Chair Hartung asked where the County was producing greenhouse gas emissions besides its vehicles. He asked if the team would make recommendations similar to the small parking structure with solar panels that the City of Sparks had implemented. He believed the City of Sparks initially implemented that to offset the cost of power, but it resulted in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Korbolic opined that idea should be considered but it was not necessarily in the plans. He said the parking structure at the Ninth Street facility had a lot of rooftops where solar could be installed. nZero provided a lot of good data, including the electricity usage down to the hour and by the facility. This granular data would be analyzed to make decisions about how the facilities were used. The facilities accounted for a majority of the greenhouse gas emissions, and two sites alone were responsible for 46 percent of all the greenhouse gas emissions. He explained the County consumed electricity which caused a gas or coal-fired power plant to emit greenhouse gases. That was a scope to emission. Chair Hartung said he thought all the coal-fired power plants in Nevada were converted to natural gas. Mr. Korbolic believed there was still one coal power plant in the region. He explained the County buildings consumed electricity and that was counted towards its greenhouse gas emissions. The two sites that were responsible for 46 percent of the County's greenhouse gas emissions were the wastewater reclamation facilities and the Sheriff's Office (WCSO) with the detention center. The wastewater reclamation facility usage was a combination of the three facilities located in Cold Springs, South Truckee Meadows, and Lemmon Valley. He noted those facilities were an outlier because they had very small square footage yet consumed a lot of electricity. The wastewater reclamation facilities operated 24 hours per day and had pumps and aerators that consistently ran on electricity. The WCSO, along with the detention center, was a very large facility that also operated 24 hours per day. 22 percent of the County's emissions came from its fleet. Using nZero, the team was able to track the 1,000-plus vehicles the County managed. He noted there were a number of things to discuss about how to move forward regarding the fleet.

Commissioner Garcia asked if the County used Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification or any other program, system, or benchmark to measure the efficiency of the existing buildings and the new builds. Mr. Korbolic did not believe so, but he deferred to Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro. Mr. Solaro said over the years the County utilized principles of LEED in new building design and construction but had not gone far enough to have any of its buildings LEED-certified. County Manager Eric Brown asked why. Mr. Solaro responded that the ongoing reporting and maintenance of the program was problematic to get into the budget. He explained that over the years the facilities department worked to increase the square footage while decreasing the expense, thereby decreasing the use of energy in the facilities. When looking at the numbers as a result of that effort, he opined it was quite impressive. The team asked nZero to provide data about how the County measured up to similarly-sized municipalities because there were many things being done by the County. He noted action was taken that was not listed on the "Brief History" slide. He was excited about bringing a Sustainability Manager on board who could help develop support and provide input about the benefits of utilizing LEED or another green building initiative. Chair Hartung informed the County had replaced most of its fluorescent fixtures with light-emitting diode (LED) lights. Mr. Solaro said the County utilized the NV Energy rebate program for years to make that

change. He informed there was a facility technician at the detention facility who made it his mission to ensure there was no fluorescent lighting in the facility. He believed the County had made great strides in many areas and thought it was important to get a comprehensive understanding of what direction the Board wanted to go in. Ms. Olsen reminded there were two discussion topics. One related to the State of Nevada's goals and the other was regarding fleet.

Mr. Korbolic reminded he spoke about the State of Nevada's goals and the possibility of the County matching those goals as its target. He said the high-level recommendation from the team was that the County match the end goal of the State, which was net zero by 2050. He noted that was a long time horizon and said the State had interim goals, such as 28 percent by 2025 and 45 percent by 2030. The team proposed the County set the end goal and when the Sustainability Manager was hired, that person could research interim steps for the County. He said those interim steps could be LEED certification, building improvements, or improvements to fleet management. Those steps would then be built into the goal-setting process. Chair Hartung asked how the County could do better, short of it establishing its own energy production. He did not want the County to move to electric vehicles (EV) if those vehicles could not satisfy the necessary distance requirements for employees to do their jobs. Mr. Korbolic said that referred to fleet management. Chair Hartung said the County tried to minimize its emissions by installing energy-efficient bulbs and keeping the buildings' heating and cooling to a minimum during off hours. Mr. Korbolic acknowledged Chair Hartung was correct and mentioned Mr. Solaro's team did an excellent job of retrofitting and upfitting facilities to reduce energy use. He thought over time the grid would become more efficient and renewable.

Mr. Korbolic said the County could start to install solar panels, and he believed there was a desire to begin using EVs. He commented Chair Hartung was correct that EVs needed to be used in the right situations. In talking with the fleet manager, he felt there were a number of things the County could do to reduce its use of fuel. He said the world was going the way of reducing emissions, and he thought the challenge was that all of the technologies that would be implemented between the present and 2050 were not in the market. Chair Hartung asked if there were discussions about potentially installing battery walls that could be charged by solar panels. He said off-peak hours were better to charge a battery wall because power was not as expensive. The battery walls could be used during peak hours to almost take the buildings off the grid. Mr. Korbolic explained the program was still in its infancy and those ideas would be explored. The big picture, he said, was the County needed to be practical, pragmatic, and cost-effective when making decisions. It was not necessarily that the County would cut off all fuel use and go to EVs in a year. That was not possible. Vice Chair Hill informed the County had just purchased a lot of gas-powered vehicles. Mr. Korbolic understood and said that was identified by nZero as an easy-to-accomplish task, but it was still a three-to-five-year time horizon before any reductions in fuel or greenhouse gas emissions were seen. That was due to the time it took to turn vehicles over on the schedule the County used. He noted it would take time for things to start happening.

Commissioner Garcia asked for clarification about discussion topic one. She asked if 50 percent was being used as a metric. Mr. Korbulic said the suggestion was to look at the 2050 goal and then the County could map its own way between now and 2050. That would be based on what was mentioned regarding fleet and building efficiency. He proposed mapping things out to become more efficient over time. For example, if an air conditioner needed to be replaced in 2028, it would be replaced at that time with something more efficient. Commissioner Garcia asked if fleet efficiency was considered an easy-to-accomplish task. Mr. Korbulic said it was because it was something the County could do by changing policies, like driving habits. The County could start to discuss how it utilized its vehicles. He noted the WCSO maximized the use of its vehicles and replaced them at approximately 180,000 miles. That was about a four-year replacement rate. The engine runtime was equivalent to approximately 300,000 miles, which meant the vehicles were idling a lot. He believed a behavior change could reduce fuel use. He opined there were a number of fleet organizational changes the County could make that did not involve the use of EVs. Chair Hartung said he was told a number of years ago that the reason the WCSO needed to keep its vehicles idling had to do with the electronics in the vehicle. Mr. Korbulic said that from his understanding, the vehicles had batteries that allowed them to sit for two hours before they needed to be restarted.

Vice Chair Hill asserted the County had to have a plan to get to the desired outcome, or it would not get there. She thought having a plan would ensure the County moved forward on a path that led to value. She opined there should be check-ins during the process to address unforeseen issues. She was excited about the potential for the County and the willingness of staff to come together on the issue to make it a multi-departmental approach. She believed there were other governmental entities throughout the State working towards decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, and she proposed the Sustainability Manager reach out to those entities for assistance. She stated staff needed to move forward with the goal. Mr. Korbulic thought Vice Chair Hill made a good point that this could become part of the culture of the County. He opined the County could think about energy efficiency with every decision it made. He believed there were things the County could implement pretty early in the program.

Commissioner Garcia loved that the initiative was coming from staff. She asked if the Sustainability Manager position would be enough to carry the momentum forward. Mr. Korbulic opined one of the duties of the new Sustainability Manager would involve researching external funding opportunities. He noted that could be a large job due to the Inflation Reduction Act and the federal funding regarding energy efficiency and electrification. He said the answer to Commissioner Garcia's question was dependent on the cadence of being able to acquire funding and implement projects. He thought those things could be challenging. Commissioner Garcia opined grant writing was an important piece of the program, and the public and private partnerships in the region were critical. Vice Chair Hill was worried the County would not get grants without a goal being identified in the Strategic Plan and adoption by the Board. She opined the organizations that issued the grants would want to see that it was a long-term goal of the Board and see follow through on the program. Mr. Korbulic thought that was a possibility. He noted he spoke with Community Reinvestment Manager Gabrielle Enfield regarding the Inflation

Reduction Act and a lot of those programs had not been developed yet, so staff would have to take a “wait and see” approach on that.

Ms. Olsen asked if Mr. Korbolic got the direction he needed. Mr. Korbolic wanted to clarify that the Board saw fleet as an easy-to-accomplish task and there were things the County could do organizationally that did not involve buying or replacing all vehicles with EVs. He asked if the Board had any additional thoughts about tackling the fleet as a first step. Chair Hartung said there were fleet solution technologies he could talk to Mr. Korbolic about that would increase fuel efficiency and power and decrease maintenance schedules and emissions. Vice Chair Hill said staff was working on getting more EV charging stations because there was not enough charging infrastructure in the County. She believed the County had a role to play by providing that charging infrastructure at the regional parks and golf courses.

There was no public comment on this item.

23-0060 **AGENDA ITEM 6C** Equity: The opportunity to engage executive leadership, staff, and community to understanding meaningful ways to bring forward the work of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion by adding Equity initiatives to Washoe County’s strategic plan.

Erica Olsen, Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of OnStrategy, said Human Resources (HR) Organizational Effectiveness Manager Elizabeth Jourdin and County Manager Eric Brown would lead the discussion. Ms. Olsen continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Equity; Discussion Topics.

Chair Hartung asked if the item was segregated into employees versus the public. Ms. Jourdin replied it was not separated but both would be addressed. She encouraged discussion about both because of the differences between the two. Chair Hartung said the two were very different and he dealt with that at the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). The RTC worked to ensure the bus stops were all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. Manager Brown noted this topic was similar to the sustainability topic because there were goals at the international, national, and State level. He believed the County lagged behind in equity and inclusion. He encouraged the Board to consider embracing equity and noted it had broad employee support. The County had increasingly heard concerns from the public regarding the accessibility of facilities and websites for those who were hearing-impaired, sight-impaired, or non-English speakers. He thought addressing the issues was the right thing to do on many levels. He said there were situations in the Office of the County Manager (OCM) and Homeless Services where individuals had encountered cultural barriers. He felt those issues needed to be addressed if the County wanted to provide equity.

Ms. Jourdin continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Purpose; Equity is; In practice, this looks like; Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act; What do Title VI violations look like; Americans with Disabilities

Act (ADA) Title II; ADA Title II violations look like; Why now; Where are we today; Opportunities for engagement.

Ms. Jourdin spoke about the “In practice, this looks like” slide. She was sure the Board had seen the displayed image before in various forms. The first image on the slide showed phase 1 regarding the history of equality where policies and procedures provided the same resources to everyone in the hopes everyone would have the same outcome. She pointed out that the first image on the slide showed equality did not provide the smallest individual the ability to view the balloons. Over time, equality progressed to equity which meant an organization had to assess where individuals were and what they needed in order to get them to a place of opportunity that was equal to others. The second image of phase 2 showed that the box was removed from the tallest individual, and the shortest individual had two boxes. Phase 3, shown as the third image, was equity without barriers. This meant analyzing systemic barriers that could prevent individuals from reaching their fullest potential and then empowering them. In some cases, when an organization was not legally mandated to provide assistance, the removal of barriers enabled people to reach empowerment on their own without asking for accommodations or help. She opined the County should focus its end goal on removing barriers where it made sense, as opposed to working in phases 1 and 2.

Ms. Jourdin said the County was required to comply with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, in programs and activities that received federal funds. In addition, it also prohibited practices that had the effect of discrimination on those same bases. She noted there was a common misunderstanding that this only applied to the department that received federal funds; however, it applied to the entire organization as soon as federal funds or grants were received. She said not having an organization-wide limited English proficiency (LEP) plan to engage citizens who may speak English as a second language was a violation. Unintended barriers were also Title VI violations. These included things like hiring and recruitment practices that may appear neutral or equal, but under data analysis were found to put a particular group at a disadvantage.

Commissioner Clark asked if it was a civil rights violation and could be considered discriminatory if a person had to spend extra time in jail due to not having the opportunity for proper representation, or if a person was incarcerated longer because they could not get in front of a judge for a proper hearing to be released. Ms. Jourdin responded those were services that could be in violation of Title VI. Commissioner Clark asked if the court backlog and people who could not get a proper hearing would be considered a violation. Ms. Jourdin replied that was possible, but she would defer to the District Attorney’s (DA) Office on the matter. Manager Brown said the State was currently in a similar situation due to its lack of juvenile mental health services. The State did not have juvenile mental health services and had to send juveniles out of State for that service. The federal government notified the State that practice was unacceptable. He noted Commissioner Clark’s point was well taken. Commissioner Clark said he did not have the statistics with him that day, but the statistics showed that predominantly minority

individuals were held in jail longer because the court system was flawed. He stated he wanted to find out more about that.

Ms. Jourdin observed Title II of the ADA was specific to public entities. Currently, the common and often talked about violation was related to digital accessibility and websites. This included websites that were not ADA-enabled for audio and visual impairments. Other violations included not having accessible facilities, and policies and procedures that unintentionally limited the participation of individuals with disabilities. She mentioned the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) previously received a digital accessibility complaint, as well as an ADA compliance complaint against Mackay Stadium. She said the Mackay Stadium complaint was interesting because even though the contractor set aside enough accessible seating and the stadium was ADA compliant, those in wheelchairs sitting in the ADA seating did not have an equal view of the playing field. She commented she received monthly blogs and newsletters from ADA and Title VI organizations and consultants. In the last month, counties and cities were being brought forward and served lawsuits around Title VI violations and ADA accessibility. She informed the potential was there, and she agreed with Manager Brown that the County did not want to live to mitigate when providing accessibility and equity was the right thing to do for the citizens.

Chair Hartung recalled an individual he had introduced to Manager Brown whose specialty was digital accessibility and websites. He was unsure if the County's Technology Services (TS) Department was capable of handling those issues, or if it was more cost-effective for the County to hire an outside person to handle them. He opined an ounce of prevention was worth many pounds of cure in this particular matter. Manager Brown said the purpose that day was to get feedback from the Board. He mentioned he spoke with staff about the individual Chair Hartung was referring to and noted staff would contact the individual for assistance. Chair Hartung believed the matter was not only the right thing to do, but the County had a duty to protect its assets. He asserted the County needed to put something into place to protect itself from litigation otherwise it would be vulnerable in many different areas.

Manager Brown said over the past year, his eyes were opened to health equity. The health district received a grant to research health equity and staff began addressing some of those opportunities. The health district conducted a required community health assessment, and he was amazed to see it matched up with some of the things the County learned during the pandemic when it was trying to reach underserved communities about testing and vaccines. He recently met with Washoe County School District (WCSD) Superintendent Dr. Susan Enfield, and equity was something that was also on her mind. Due to the interplay between the County departments and the WCSD, Manager Brown and Dr. Enfield agreed that efforts needed to be made in the region that the County could be proud of. Manager Brown did not think the County should spend money and resources irresponsibly, but said additional efforts needed to be made. He asked the Board to consider allowing the County to make equity a feature within the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Jourdin said the redesigned Title VI and ADA complaint procedures and processes were available under the HR section of the County website. Over the past year and a half, the County worked on diversity, equity, and inclusion training for staff and started to analyze recruitments, practices, and experiences to increase staff's cultural awareness and education. An organization-wide language access plan for LEP individuals would ensure departments had policies and procedures in place to equally serve those with limited English proficiency. A service and program delivery analysis would be conducted to see if there were any unintended barriers to access created by the County through its procedures, policies, and administration areas. Research would be done to find out where it made sense to revise policies. She asked if there were any priority areas of interest to the Board.

Commissioner Garcia asked District Health Officer Kevin Dick to speak about the most recent community health needs assessment and its findings. Mr. Dick explained the health district recently finished its community health needs assessment, and as part of that, it integrated health equity. The health district completed a health equity capacity assessment using a framework developed by the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII). The BARHII was developed in the Bay Area and used in other areas of the County. It provided a framework for engaging an organization and its community groups to research organizational capacity for health equity. The health district completed internal and external surveys, interviews with internal leadership, interviews with external leadership stakeholders, and conducted a listening tour where staff met with 59 different individuals in 29 different meetings. The listening tour generated feedback from individuals about their impressions of the health district and how it engaged the public. From that feedback, the health district developed a health equity organizational capacity-building plan that was now part of its Strategic Plan document. There were a number of components of the Strategic Plan document that addressed training staff to understand health equity, incorporating health equity into programs, better engagement of community organizations when developing programs on the front end, and researching barriers. The health district was working with HR Professional Services to review some of its internal position classifications. He noted there were employees from many different places and backgrounds who had not been to college and may not have a path forward at the health district due to the current class specifications. The health district was researching how to break down those barriers internally with things like revisions to class specifications. He said the health district engaged its employees in the development of the process and received a lot of interest and participation. The health district organized a Health Equity committee and out of 190 full-time employees (FTE), 30 volunteered to participate.

Mr. Dick explained that during the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic, the health district recognized many people in the community had different circumstances depending on their living situations, which were often driven by things such as minority status, age, and disability. He said there was a lot of differentiation in the conditions that affected people. He noted there was initial funding to hire Ms. Tiffany Young, a local consultant, to help with capacity assessment and training. The health district hired a couple of community organizers to better reach people. Those positions were established within the

County structure to engage communities. He explained grassroots organizations helped communities that had issues, such as a highway built through a disadvantaged community. He noted the County did not have much in the way of grassroots organizations throughout its communities because things like a highway being built through a disadvantaged community did not happen here. He said the County was working to help create relationships with different members of the public through community organizers in an attempt to get more interaction and engagement. The health district had community health workers in the clinical program to help with a case management type of approach for clients.

Chair Hartung asked for a basic definition of health equity. Mr. Dick referred back to the “In practice, this looks like” slide, noting a person’s situation affected their health outcome. This was proven by the community health needs assessment performed by the health district every few years. Chair Hartung asked if it was access to quality healthcare. Mr. Dick explained it was more than that because what the health district was seeing was that people were impacted by their housing stability and food security. Both of those things affected how well a person did in school and their educational attainment. He opined health equity was a big-picture thing. Chair Hartung said “access to” could mean affordability. Mr. Dick replied access was a big piece of it, but what the health district found was that healthcare was actually a small part of what a person’s health outcome was over the course of their lifetime. Social habits, or social determinants of health, shaped a person’s opportunities and behaviors. Manager Brown noted that where a person lived was the biggest determinant, not whether a person went to the doctor. Social determinants could be lead paint in a building, high crimes that shortened lives, or violent episodes in a child’s household. He was excited to have the opportunity to address the issue and said he worked with Mr. Dick very closely throughout the C19 pandemic. He said that he and Mr. Dick were very committed to working with the health district and other stakeholder agencies to make a difference and ensure changes were seen in the next community health assessment. Chair Hartung explained the reason he brought those questions up was for the understanding of the citizens watching the meeting.

Mr. Dick reiterated healthcare was a small part of it. All of the other major determinants for health went far beyond what the health district or the healthcare system could accomplish; however, healthcare was something the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) could work on for the community. Chair Hartung explained there were seniors on Medicare who did not understand they were eligible for other parts of Medicare as well. He opined it could be overwhelming and difficult for a person, especially if they were not technologically savvy. Mr. Dick noted transportation was also a big issue. Chair Hartung agreed and said transportation became very difficult for a person if they were not in a senior living facility. He explained that was why the RTC tried to make its systems more robust for micro and public transit.

Manager Brown asked to return to the “In practice, this looks like” slide and said the topic of equity was a much different concept now than how the County had historically managed it. He stated the illustration on the left side of the slide showed everybody being provided the same thing, which was a problem if a person was in an

underserved community. He gave the example of broadband and said if the County spent the same amount of money to get broadband in the North Valleys, Rancho Haven, and Gerlach as it did in downtown Reno, those communities would never catch up to the downtown area. This was because those outlying communities needed more than the downtown area did. He explained it was a different concept than what the County had historically done when it tried to give everyone the same thing. He mentioned some of the election challenges the County faced, such as access to voting locations and ballots. Vice Chair Hill brought up the long wait times at some of the election locations. Manager Brown opined if the same thing was done for every community, some communities would never get better. He asked the Board not to just embrace equity but to deploy it more pervasively in the County to ensure it met the needs of underserved populations. Chair Hartung hoped the plan was for the County to coordinate with the State. He recalled Governor Joe Lombardo mentioning during his State of the State address that a large amount of money would be spent to bring broadband to the rural communities of Nevada. Manager Brown said the County was looking extensively at providing broadband to places like East Washoe Valley, the North Valleys, Red Rock, Rancho Haven, and Wadsworth.

Ms. Olsen asked if staff had the direction they needed to proceed and if the Board had any additional priority areas. Vice Chair Hill said she saw it as an internal and external issue because the County could not serve the external community without fully representing them internally. She gave an example of lights being out and the community not notifying the County due to distrust and worry that there may be other issues if the County came out to fix the lights. She said it sounded like staff understood things were all connected. She hoped the County would look at how it hired, how it operated as an organization, and how it served its very diverse public. Ms. Jourdin assured that was the intent. Commissioner Garcia asked if the items on the “Opportunities for engagement” slide would be automatically rolled into the list of priorities. Ms. Jourdin replied staff was seeking confirmation that those were areas they could begin to work on. The work would expand to areas like the Community Services Department (CSD), service response times, and other things that were based on zip codes and data.

Commissioner Clark said that six years ago, the Assessor’s Office (AO) did not have Spanish-speaking employees at the front desk area. The AO went out of its way to hire people who were fluent in Spanish so the department could explain personal property tax issues to business owners and make them feel comfortable. The AO also held a community outreach session in the health district conference room with a Spanish-speaking employee to explain personal property taxes to business owners. He recalled that the AO, before hiring Spanish-speaking employees, had to piece together limited knowledge of the Spanish language to communicate with its customers. He asked if the County had fluent Spanish speakers employed in departments that had a front desk or interacted with the public. Ms. Jourdin answered the majority of the departments did; however, the fluency level of those employees had not been tested or certified. She noted it could be a Title VI violation if employees tried to piece together knowledge of a language because each interaction could potentially be different; therefore, the access to service could be different. She explained that part of going through the LEP plan would be a thorough examination of the departments to analyze how much interaction occurred with

second-language English speakers, if the department's documentation was translated appropriately, what types of second-language speakers were needed on staff, if the department should hire employees to fill the need, and whether the department needed access to a translation line with certified speakers.

Commissioner Clark said until the AO had proper staffing, someone who spoke limited Spanish went to the front desk. The office did not have an alternate plan if that person was absent that day. Ms. Jourdin said part of the LEP plan would be to lay out a process and procedure for each defined department, which would include alternate plans such as the translation line. Commissioner Clark mentioned cross-training for the translation department to ensure the employees were also fluent in what a particular department did. Ms. Jourdin replied that could be considered. Chair Hartung asked if the County was bound by the same rules for certified translators as the court system. Ms. Jourdin explained the court-certified translators were part of a more intensive program and process that they were legally bound by. She explained the certified second language speakers she referred to would be tested on their proficiency levels in the language. She informed the health district did a lot of work to provide customers with specific Spanish translation services and training for its bilingual staff to make sure they were translating technically and efficiently.

There was no public comment on this item.

23-0061 **AGENDA ITEM 6D** Election System: Confirm investment areas for infrastructure, process & staffing.

Erica Olsen, Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of OnStrategy, informed that Registrar of Voters Jamie Rodriguez would lead the Board through the election system topic. County Manager Eric Brown reminded that at the conclusion of the general election in 2022, Vice Chair Hill and others had requested an operational review of the County's performance during the election. At that time, staff reached out to some outside firms and began holding conversations. The County received proposals from two firms and planned to make a selection by the end of that week. Both firms were highly recommended by the Secretary of State's (SOS) Office and other national election organizations. They were made up of former registrars of voters, clerks, and other election professionals. He hoped to have a recommendation to the Board of which firm to go with by the end of January.

Ms. Rodriguez said there was a large list of things the Registrar of Voters Office (ROV) heard regarding elections. Some of those items included better maintenance of voter rolls and more accurate and readable reporting of election results. She believed the public was missing some basic election information regarding the election process, voter registration, voter roll maintenance, and the ballot creation process. Other things to address were better maintenance of which offices were open and should be on the ballot, better tracking of the mail-in ballots and the options available for those, the large increase in call volume, and how to provide better service to the residents. Regarding vote centers, the ROV found there were sites that were not really being used and some that were overrun.

She opined the ROV needed to work with its regional partners and other groups to figure out how to alleviate some of the overrun locations to provide better service. She said those were the primary concerns the ROV had heard and asked if there were any other key points to address going into the 2024 election.

Vice Chair Hill asked if the analysis from whichever firm the County hired would be incorporated into the ROV recommendations. Manager Brown replied yes, and said it was within the scope of work. He reminded that the Board received the scope of work in December 2022 and it matched up with the list Ms. Rodriguez had just provided. Commissioner Clark said the voters needed to be involved in the process and asked if workshops could be held to get input. He explained the Assessor's Office (AO) was the most hated department by residents in Incline Village (IV) about eight years ago. When he was elected, he made a point to befriend the people of IV and ascertain their legitimate concerns. To this day, he noted, the people in IV were his friends. Every year before the value notices went out, the AO brought community leaders from IV to the office and outlined the action taken on the value. He said those people left the office happy because they were heard and treated properly. He opined many times people did not have to be right, they just wanted to be heard. People did not want to be told they were wrong, the County was right, and they could take it or leave it. He believed this example was comparable to the voter integrity issue. He said a previous District Attorney (DA) and a previous Assessor chose to tell people they were wrong and to take it or leave it. He explained that resulted in one of the largest settlements ever against the County. He reiterated the voters just wanted to be heard.

Ms. Rodriguez agreed with Commissioner Clark and said the ROV would cover some of those big pieces. She believed a better explanation and education about the process were a big part of it. She thought there were a lot of misnomers about the voter roll maintenance process, such as when a voter could be made inactive or canceled and what was required for those actions. She noted there were many federal laws that stipulated a certain number of outreaches to voters. The ROV was putting together working groups for some of the poll workers to discover what was helpful for training and what resources were needed. Feedback was received from a couple of groups about a desire for a larger group to provide feedback to the ROV. The ROV was researching the best way to do that, who would be invited to that group, and how to make it an operational function of the office. She explained that part of the ask for larger, inclusive staffing was to have more people available to conduct outreach. Currently, she was the only one who could present for the department. She opined the ROV had an ambitious year ahead of itself. She commented she would love to partner more with the school district to help high school seniors understand the registration and voting processes. She wanted to make that information more accessible so people did not show up to vote without understanding the process. She believed there was a lot of confusion around the process and a litany of work needed to be done. She explained there were many general improvement districts (GID) that did not communicate with the ROV, which became a problem because the ROV was not aware of resignations, appointments, and vacancies. She wanted to do more outreach to the GIDs to resolve those issues. She said there were things the ROV needed to do better and it would work on those. She hoped the Board would provide direction and allow her to move

forward with the expansion because the ROV needed to do a better job of communicating processes and obtaining feedback.

Commissioner Clark asserted he was probably the only person in the room who had to go to court to get his name on the ballot. He explained his registration was changed and he was told he should have caught that. He later found out that 44,000 other Nevadans had their party affiliation changed. It cost him \$19,000 to remain on the ballot. He believed the issue with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) made the County look bad, and he opined the DMV was not a subject matter expert on ROV issues. He opined the Board needed to figure out how to get away from that system. Ms. Rodriguez did not believe automatic voter registration would go away. She continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the “Areas to Address & Actions in Progress” slide. She said there were a couple of things the ROV was researching and asked whether the Board supported action moving forward.

Ms. Rodriguez explained the ROV wanted to purchase a new voter registration and election management system. She noted the current system used by the ROV was very old and was no longer supported. The company the ROV purchased the system from was purchased by another vendor who gave the ROV technical support; however, the new vendor was not able to do any reprogramming of the system which caused a lot of issues for the ROV. In addition, the system was not built to run a mail-in election. She said the current system could not provide things the ROV was required by the State to report, or provide reports the public expected. The current system could not furnish the number of ballots that were cured, and it did not track how many ballots were challenged and then verified. The newer systems supplied a multitude of ways to contact voters and a better way of tracking that contact. She said there were many systems that had better voter portals that showed every piece of mail sent by the ROV and gave the voter the ability to respond within the portal before they even received the mail. She opined several of the new systems were built to address modern elections. She explained automatic voter registration was not likely to go away, in fact, there was legislation to expand it to a multitude of other agencies going into the next year. She thought automatic voter registration would continuously make the system a bit messier and a better system would help the ROV manage that. The newer systems had the ability to better catch duplicate voters due to the popularity of automatic voter registration across the Country. She noted the current system the ROV used did not have that feature and would only catch direct matches. State legislation was being proposed to move from a bottom-up Voter Registration and Election Management Solution (VREMS) to a top-down VREMS. The bottom-up VREMS meant the voter information was collected and housed within the counties and the counties provided reports to the State. A transition to a top-down VREMS meant the information would be held at the State, but the County was still in charge of processing it. She believed the top-down VREMS would allow for better coordination between the counties. She reminded that during the election the County heard extensively about the confusion between its reporting of election status versus the reporting of the SOS and BallotTrax. She said the County had extensive conversations with the State to provide it with information. The State then produced that information on its website, and that information was provided to BallotTrax which was the third-party vendor. She noted when

customers called her about glitches with BallotTrax, she was not able to provide information because she could only see what the ROV's information showed her. She did not know what happened in the translation of information because BallotTrax was not her vendor. She said the SOS told voters to call the County because it was the County's information.

Chair Hartung asked if BallotTrax was private or run through the State. Ms. Rodriguez replied it was a private third-party vendor with a State paid contract. She said moving to a top-down system would allow the County and the State to pull the same information. She would no longer have to provide the information to the State so it could provide the information to BallotTrax. She mentioned the State's timeline for the top-down system was possibly by the general election in 2024. She said the County could not wait for that. Manager Brown explained the County could not wait because the current system it had was not supported. Ms. Rodriguez informed part of the State's implementation for the general election of 2024 was based on the Legislature funding the remainder of the contract through the current legislative session. From her understanding, the matter had bipartisan support. Based on reports from the SOS, the amount needed for the program was included in Governor Joe Lombardo's budget. Unfortunately, the County could not wait due to the issues with the current system and the system's inability to produce some of the necessary reporting. She asked the Board to allow staff to move forward with the implementation ahead of the State so the County could have the new system for all three elections in 2024. She reminded there would be a presidential preference primary election in 2024 instead of a caucus. In 2024, there would be a presidential preference primary, a regular primary, and a general election. She did not feel it was prudent to run two elections with a broken system and hope for a working system for the third election.

Chair Hartung asked if the County moved forward ahead of the State, could the County apply for reimbursement from the State. Ms. Rodriguez said there was an ongoing conversation about how that would work, and it could be partially dependent upon the contract negotiations. She noted one of the vendors the State was looking at was the vendor Clark County currently used. Conversations had occurred regarding jurisdictions that had already put forth the costs associated with the transition and the possibility of either a reimbursement or the State taking over the contract. She explained that for voter registration, the County would have the original cost of onboarding to the new system and there were also annual costs to continue to use the system. She assured that staff was having those conversations. Staff was looking at using the State's poll book because it would significantly help with same-day voter registration and long lines at the polling locations. With the poll book, people would not have to manually fill out a paper application in the middle of a vote center. The State was considering including a fiscal request for the purchase of poll books for the counties. County staff was having conversations with the State regarding reimbursements for those books; however, the County needed to budget or plan for it in case the State did not receive the funds in time.

Manager Brown believed there were other counties that were not as large as Washoe County but were in the same position. Ms. Rodriguez said there were other counties with system issues that wanted to move ahead of the State. Manager Brown

mentioned some members of the Board were going to the National Association of Counties (NACo) conference in Washington, D.C. in February. He opined this matter was urgent. Ms. Olsen asked Ms. Rodriguez if she received the needed direction. Ms. Rodriguez noted that besides the technology and infrastructure, there were staffing issues. She explained that updating voter registration was an extremely manual process. Even the automatic voter registration information through the DMV took a long time to onboard into the ROV's website. She opined even with a new system the process would still be very time intensive. The ROV was looking into an expansion of staffing to better address public records requests and customer service and to create improved consistencies in the office. Additional staffing would help the ROV create better redundancies. Currently, the small staff of the ROV had a multitude of responsibilities and one employee was responsible for one area, with no other employee knowing how to perform that duty. This created a gap in the ROV's ability to continue to provide services when employees were out sick or left the department. Adding more employees would create better organization for the department and allow for backup employees for the positions. She noted the ROV would need to onboard a large number of temporary employees because there was no way to build a department large enough to conduct an election; however, having more full-time employees (FTE) would lead to better policies and procedures and ensure employee trainings and services to customers were consistent. She asked if staff could move forward on the primary action plans and if there was anything the Board wanted staff to work on.

Commissioner Herman heard from people in the community that they wanted a constitutional election, not a prolonged election that was famous for its mistakes. She recalled a time when the County had one-day elections and opined that this worked. She believed the County needed to decrease the number of days it took to complete an election. Ms. Rodriguez stated there was nothing her office could do regarding that matter. She noted there were currently legislative actions that allowed for early voting and determined the period of time for the return of the ballots. Commissioner Herman said there were things the County could do. She proposed the County do what had worked in the past. Manager Brown acknowledged that although it was early in Governor Lombardo's term, he thought there would be conversations in Carson City regarding the matter. He said it was not something the County was authorized to change. Chair Hartung asked Ms. Rodriguez if a cross-training plan and testing would be created to ensure job functions could be done if employees were absent. Ms. Rodriguez replied that the new organizational infrastructure she was researching would create teams of individuals and requirements for cross-training. This would ensure that if a person took a vacation, another person in the office knew the duties of that position. Chair Hartung said it was also important that staff knew where things were stored. Ms. Rodriguez mentioned she was working on a very detailed calendar regarding the elections and better reporting from staff as to where they were on their assignments. There were certain statutory deadlines the ROV had to abide by, but once the number of polling locations was confirmed decisions would have to be made regarding how many poll workers, books, and machines were needed. It was important that information was stored where the whole department could access it and she could cross-reference it. She said there should be a breakdown of the information and a structure that said where it was stored and who was in charge of storing it. She proposed regular reporting at staff meetings and cross-functional meetings with other departments to

ensure everything was done in a timely manner. Chair Hartung clarified that meant if a project was assigned to someone in the ROV, there were multiple people on the team who understood the project and were able to access information about it. Ms. Rodriguez said a procedure would state where to access documentation on a shared drive. That would prevent documents from being saved in different places by multiple people. Chair Hartung explained he had to come up with a filing system in his own business that everyone understood and could access. He thought it was imperative to have that in place.

Ms. Olsen asked if there was anything else the Board wanted to address. Vice Chair Hill was supportive of the plan and looked forward to seeing in detail what the ROV had asked for in the budget. She noted the ROV was a difficult department to work in and she thought it was great to have redundancies with staff. She hoped the County could incentivize the staff to stay but if people left, she wanted to ensure institutional knowledge was not lost. She assured that she and Commissioner Herman would work with the other counties regarding the system questions. Chair Hartung reminded that in the last election, a private company decided the County could no longer use its facilities to hold elections. He said the County was at the mercy of that private company and wondered if the County was renting the space or if the company had offered its space as a public service. He believed the Board needed to discuss whether it should use only public facilities. He recalled he used to vote at an elementary school, then it was moved to the library, and one year he voted at a fire station. Ms. Rodriguez thought the ROV would have to work with the DA's Office to find out about the contracts with the vote centers. She said the County was lucky that Raley's pulled its locations when it did because she had not listed Raley's stores as polling locations yet. Statutorily, once a location was published as a polling place the liability fell on the County to ensure it followed through; however, she had no way to enforce that with Raley's. She explained the ROV was working on the matter and researching how other jurisdictions handled contracts with vote centers. Historically, the County set the same hours and days for each polling location throughout the entirety of the election. Larger jurisdictions were able to get more community assistance because they allowed different hours for locations. For example, Clark County used a lot of churches as polling locations because vote centers were open Monday through Saturday and closed on Sundays. She believed there were ways for the County to be more flexible and use more facilities. She noted using more facilities instead of just public facilities would help address some of the strain in certain areas. She gave the example of the Spanish Springs Library, which was a very busy polling location, and said there were few government facilities in that area she could use to offset the strain on the library. Chair Hartung said that historically schools were used. Ms. Rodriguez replied schools could be used on Election Day but could not be used for early voting because school was in session.

Chair Hartung asked if Manager Brown needed any formal direction from the Board, and Manager Brown answered he did not. Ms. Olsen stated a break should be taken. Chair Hartung said he would call public comment on this item first.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Oscar Williams said Ms. Rodriguez brought up a lot of interesting points. He thanked Commissioner Clark for his suggestion of public workshops. He hoped the ROV's best practices analysis would relate to voter

confidence and said that should be what the ROV hoped to accomplish. He thought a key point of discussion should be the topic of accountability and what that meant. He suggested voter registration be relegated to the ROV and the conduct of elections duties should go to the County Clerk. He opined this would unburden the ROV, allowing it to perfect voter registration. He said the ROV's mission statement mentioned transparency and accountability. He wondered why the County used BallotTrax, the DMV automatic registration system, and the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) system if the systems were flawed and had been for three elections. He opined the County needed to stand up to the State and say the systems were not working. He said Assistant District Attorney Nathan Edwards wrote a dissertation on the modified Dillon's Rule enshrining top-down election management. He found that to be offensive because the County had innate rights in the Constitution to conduct elections. He noted the County had many responsibilities and Nevada was a bottom-up state. He appreciated that voter registration was a top-down system, with the SOS providing the ROV with voter rolls, signature rules, guidance, and funding for the election systems. He believed the State wished to usurp power over the counties. He said it was offensive when Chief Deputy District Attorney Mary Kandaras threatened the Board at the November canvass of the vote with a potential writ proceeding if the Board did not approve the canvass.

2:08 p.m. **The Board recessed.**

2:17 p.m. **The Board reconvened with all members present.**

23-0062 **AGENDA ITEM 6E** Housing: Establish the direction of policy for affordable housing and housing diversity.

Erica Olsen, Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of OnStrategy, said an hour was allocated to discuss housing. Housing and Homeless Services Division Director Dana Searcy introduced Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro, Planning and Building Division Director Kelly Mullin, and Housing and Grants Specialist JD Klippenstein. She said they were gathered in a true multi-department joint force to discuss housing. She reminded that the Board discussed housing during its workshop in 2022. The focus of that conversation was related to the finalization and implementation of the trust fund, and to focus on permanent supportive housing (PSH). PSH was a type of housing that direct clients from many County programs, such as the Cares Campus and Our Place, benefitted from. She informed the goal of the current conversation was to build on the previous discussion and take the County into the next phase. In the next phase, the County would review the available tools and decide what it should consider offering to developers who wanted to build affordable housing. She noted there was a lot of information, and the presenters would move through it quickly. There were many different layers, maps, and terms regarding the matter and the presenters would answer any questions the Board had. She said different terminology was used for affordable housing, such as workforce housing and PSH; however, to the County, it meant researching incentives, subsidies, or other tools to make housing more affordable.

Chair Hartung considered the area median income (AMI). He discussed a family member who had a \$2,500 per month student loan payment. He acknowledged children were told it was good to be educated and go to college, but then they accumulated student debt they could not afford. He believed it was incumbent on the Board to have a broader conversation about the matter. He hoped staff would work with regional partners to find a solution. He recalled that when he first moved to the area, Harrah's had discounted employee apartments. He wanted staff to start talking to some of the larger employers about the constraints that quality employees faced. Ms. Searcy requested the discussion be taken back a bit before those conversations were held. She inquired about what tools the County should use to work with developers. She asked the Board to discuss whether or not it would like staff to consider affordable housing mandates, incentives, or both. She noted staff would discuss the different incentives to get the Board's direction. Things to consider were whether the Board wanted to use easy-to-accomplish incentives or longer-term complex incentives that required funding. She stated it was important staff got direction from the Board about which incentives should be pursued and if the incentives would apply to any location in the unincorporated County or if specific areas in need of affordable housing should be targeted. Chair Hartung said another piece was to have conversations with the Cities of Sparks and Reno so the policies and directives were consistent among the regional partners. Ms. Searcy acknowledged that was important.

Mr. Solaro noted the Master Plan update was in process for the unincorporated area of Washoe County. He said the next step was the Development Code update which would place policies into the Development Code and give the County tools to use. Currently, the County did not have many tools available if a developer wanted to create affordable housing. This could create stumbling blocks for the developer, like expenses related to parking or drainage. He said that presently a variance process had to occur which was intensive for staff, developers, and the community because it slowed the process down. He noted that time was money, and some of the affordable housing projects already had slim margins. He wanted to discuss concepts about how to help move affordable housing along in the unincorporated areas of the County. He said Mr. Klippenstein would speak later about the work staff intended to do with the partners at the Cities of Sparks and Reno, but the focus for the Board was unincorporated Washoe County. He reminded there was a Regional Plan with different layers. He wanted to hear from each member of the Board about their views on the issue so he could work those into the Development Code update. County Manager Eric Brown asked the presenters to introduce themselves. Mr. Klippenstein said he oversaw many things connected to housing, especially housing policy work. Ms. Mullin stated she oversaw the planning and building programs, but that day's focus would be mostly on planning.

Mr. Klippenstein continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: What is Affordable Housing; Low-Income Affordable Housing Gap; Homelessness in Washoe County; Housing Continuum & Regional Roles; Affordable Housing Toolbox; Steps Taken to Increase Permanent Supportive Housing; Affordable Housing Focus in 2023; Regional Plan Policies; Affordable Housing Toolbox (2 slides); QCTs and DDAs; Qualified Census Tracts in Washoe County; Difficult to Develop Areas in Washoe County. He wanted to ensure there was a shared definition of

affordable housing. He reviewed the definition on the “What is Affordable Housing” slide. He noted housing affordability existed on a spectrum depending on household income. He explained the slide showed the challenges for low-income households because the market did not build housing that was affordable for them. The gap between housing that was affordable and the average rent in the County was significant. The 30 percent AMI group included seniors on a fixed income and people working minimum wage jobs. Those people were trying to find a studio for around \$490 a month when the average studio in the County was over \$1,100 a month. He noted that was a significant gap that the County needed to use available tools to close. Without the County using additional resources or tools, it would take another 225 years to meet the current need for affordable housing.

Mr. Klippenstein explained people experiencing homelessness would face the most significant barriers. Oftentimes, the most vulnerable community members were stuck in a cycle of homelessness and could benefit from affordable housing paired with supportive services; however, the current level of PSH units and resources was severely lacking. He said it would take the County ten years to serve the people currently on the waiting list, and many of those people did not have ten years to wait for an appropriate housing opportunity. He noted this was a significant challenge for the County and he was proud to be part of the team to address the issue. The County had taken significant steps in terms of its leadership role to address the very low end of the spectrum relating to emergency shelter and PSH. He opined the County made large strides to increase the emergency shelter capacity, but there was still a lot of room to grow in addressing the affordable housing needs. He explained the orange dotted line on the “Housing Continuum & Regional Roles” slide reflected where the County had taken a leadership role in the housing spectrum. The purple dotted line reflected where other jurisdictional partners had taken more of a lead role. He said building affordable housing across the spectrum was complicated, expensive, and took a lot of resources, which led to some overlap between the jurisdictions. He noted even when a jurisdiction took the lead in an area, there were meaningful actions that all the jurisdictions should take to collectively move towards addressing the issue.

Chair Hartung referred back to the “Homelessness in Washoe County” slide and asked how many of the chronically homeless wanted to work but needed to learn a new skill set. He inquired how many of the chronically homeless had addiction issues the County needed to address and how many were aged out of the system and past the point of being able to hold a meaningful job. Mr. Klippenstein replied that to meet the definition of a person experiencing homelessness, they had to experience homelessness for over a year or have had episodes of homelessness for at least a year and have a physical disability. He said there were some limits to employment for that group of people, but he did not have all of that data at the moment. Chair Hartung said he spoke with Manager Brown about what categories people fell into because there were some people the County could provide services to. For example, if a person struggled with addiction the County might be able to help them get sober, retrained, and back into the job market. He said there were some people who were physically incapable of working due to disabilities or age. Mr. Klippenstein explained the chart on the “Homelessness in Washoe County” slide and said the number in gold represented the people who faced the most significant barriers due to a

physical disability or challenging situations. The population in maroon showed the people who were considered non-chronic, meaning they experienced homelessness less than a certain time frame or they did not have as many significant barriers. Mr. Klippenstein stated the County tried to focus on the most vulnerable. Those were the people who would likely be homeless for a much longer period of time unless the County was able to provide more than emergency shelter. Those individuals would need other kinds of affordable housing paired with supportive services.

Commissioner Clark recalled the “Low-Income Affordable Housing Gap” slide showed the County was lacking 32,175 subsidized, affordable housing units. As the previous Washoe County Assessor, he was familiar with what happened in an economic downturn. Traditionally, 3,200 homes were built annually in the County; however, the County went approximately eight years with fewer homes being built. He opined the County lost approximately 24,000 homes during the years of the economic downturn. He thought affordable housing was a ridiculous concept. Prices for things such as labor, land, and materials had skyrocketed. He noted whenever there was a tornado or hurricane, the plywood distributors raised the price of plywood and shipped it to the areas that needed it. This led to there never being a surplus of plywood. He said time was money and opined there were only a couple of ways the County could help with the price of the product. Developers told him it took at least two years to get a project off the ground. He thought the County needed to consider how to streamline the building process and reduce fees, permits, and inspections for affordable and workforce housing. He said there needed to be an incentive for builders. He recalled Chair Hartung’s recent visit to the Tesla factory and noted it was one of the largest buildings on the west coast. He wondered how Tesla got building and grading permits through Storey County and was ready to build in 90 days. Chair Hartung said he asked the same question during his tour of the factory. He said he would speak to Commissioner Clark about it at a later time. Commissioner Clark wondered why Washoe County could not streamline its process when a contiguous county had done so. He opined the process did not need to be streamlined for everybody, but it should be streamlined for affordable and workforce housing. He believed it was important for the County to streamline the process because it had no control over the costs of labor, land, and materials. He said the developers wanted to make a profit so the County should allow them to get through the process faster and have reduced fees.

Chair Hartung recalled the County used to have a single-map system that required many steps. The County went to a two-map system to address concerns with the single-map system. He acknowledged the two-map system was not perfect. He wondered how Storey County was able to get the process completed so quickly and thought it would be good to discuss the matter. He noted there was no residential in the Tahoe-Reno Industrial (TRI) Center so it did not have to go through the public process and a grading permit could be obtained in about 24 hours. Commissioner Clark opined there had to be a way for the County to emulate some of what Storey County accomplished. He said he had conversations with Chief Executive Officer Ann Silver from the Reno+Sparks Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Silver had 200 companies willing to hire ten people each starting that day. He opined even if Ms. Silver could find jobs for 500 people out of the 2,246 people experiencing homelessness, that would be a great help. Ms. Silver told him that she took

the initiative to the City of Reno and was turned down because it was worried about the liability of the city brokering a job center. The City of Reno was worried about a person being injured on the job. Commissioner Clark believed the way to get around those concerns was to have the potential employees indemnify the city. If a person was injured on the job, he thought that should be between the employer and the employee. He said there were companies in the region that would hire people that day if the County could broker it. Chair Hartung said the CrossRoads Program and the 24/7 program were already doing that. He said he would see Ms. Silver the following day. Ms. Olsen informed the team had other ideas to present to the Board that would help incentivize in the way Commissioner Clark was discussing. She said Mr. Klippenstein would present some of those ideas in the remainder of the PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Klippenstein appreciated the conversation and noted he would review many of those components as he moved through the presentation. What he hoped to discuss was the toolbox the County needed to have in order to address the multifaceted challenges. Over the past year, the County spent much of its time researching the low-income side of the affordable housing spectrum. This, he explained, was where it was most difficult to build affordable housing due to the significant gap between the costs of building and operating and the rent that was collected. Unless there were additional funding tools, either through direct subsidy or low to no interest financing tools, those development projects never came to fruition. This meant affordable housing units for extremely low-income individuals trying to exit homelessness were not built. The tools the County had focused on were shown on the “Affordable Housing Toolbox” slide. He noted the tools were often used by affordable housing developers to finance their projects. The first tool, the Washoe County Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF), was the product of the Board’s leadership to develop a new regional tool for affordable housing for extremely low-income households. He was excited to see the impact the trust fund would have and hoped it would increase PSH in the community. The other tool was the low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC), which was a federal tool that helped finance approximately 90 percent of all low-income affordable housing in the Country. He noted that the tool played a significant role in the County.

Mr. Klippenstein wanted to ensure there was a shared definition of PSH. He stated PSH was an innovative, cost-effective, and proven solution for addressing homelessness. PSH was a best practice that combined affordable housing and leasable units at an affordable rate with the services that, oftentimes, homeless households needed in order to maintain housing. Those services were needed because the person faced complicated medical, mental health, or substance use issues. PSH helped break the cycle for the chronically homeless and the County had taken significant steps to increase its capacity to build PSH during the past year. Those steps included finalizing the AHTF and allocating \$2 million of the County’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money to the AHTF to encourage developers to build more PSH. He informed the County was awarded nearly \$22 million to purchase 5 acres of land and build 50 units of PSH at the Cares Campus. The County was currently working with an affordable housing developer to build an additional 120 units at the Cares Campus, 30 of which would be PSH and the remainder would be affordable housing for low-income households. He opined there were many more

tools that could be used and reminded that staff was looking for direction about what kind of incentives the County should pursue to encourage the development of affordable housing. He asked what planning and zoning considerations the Board was interested in to achieve affordable housing goals, and whether those considerations would be mandatory or voluntary.

Chair Hartung clarified the County received \$21.9 million from the Home Means Nevada Initiative for 50 units of PSH. He said that equaled \$440,000 per unit and opined he could rebuild his home for \$440,000. Commissioner Clark stated that was not affordable housing. Mr. Klippenstein said what made a property affordable was the debt servicing. The project would be awarded as a grant and not an interest-bearing loan that had to be paid back. He said that given the cost of construction, that amount was requested to be able to build 50 units of PSH. Chair Hartung opined he could buy a single-family house for less than \$440,000. Ms. Searcy noted the price included other things, such as the demolition of property. Commissioner Clark reiterated there was no such thing as affordable housing. He opined the County needed to look at streamlining the building process and reducing fees. Manager Brown acknowledged if he had to pay the money as a developer, this amount would not make sense financially; however, this was ARPA money. The County had to decide if it would take the ARPA money to create an opportunity that would not otherwise exist, or if the County would decline the money. Chair Hartung believed the County could do more with the ARPA money and produce more than 50 units. Commissioner Clark agreed. Manager Brown asked what price point Chair Hartung and Commissioner Clark were looking for. Commissioner Clark opined the County could have purchased an entire apartment building for the \$21.9 million. Chair Hartung acknowledged he was not savvy enough to understand what it cost to build an apartment building but thought the County could have purchased one for \$21.9 million. Commissioner Clark noted apartments were typically \$200,000 per unit, not \$400,000.

Vice Chair Hill opined the apartments would need to be retrofitted to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) because the people residing in them had significant needs. She said the building would not be a typical building. She believed the County decided a few years ago it would prioritize getting people off the streets to avoid having them end up in jail or the hospital and to reduce the effect on the County's tourism. She felt it was the right thing to do to take care of these types of individuals. She suggested the pricing be discussed with staff later so the Board could discuss what was on the agenda regarding affordable housing. Commissioner Clark agreed but said the Board had to research how to get the most out of its money. He said people often came up with other ways to make buildings ADA-compliant. Chair Hartung thought the price of the housing seemed high. Ms. Searcy said the housing was for a very high-needs population. She noted the Cares Campus was in the process of spending millions of dollars to replace buildings that were installed a year and a half ago. The buildings were disintegrating due to the need and the use of the building and the materials that were chosen. She commented that staff made some very purposeful decisions regarding the housing so it would not be an ongoing maintenance cost for the County.

Mr. Klippenstein informed that over the last couple of years, there was a lot of conversation regarding policies and practices government agencies could put into place to make an impact on affordable housing. This was because local government master plans were required to include strategies to address the creation of new affordable housing, as well as the maintenance of existing affordable housing. He noted many robust conversations between the jurisdictions and the stakeholders were held, which resulted in the most comprehensive housing strategy plan called Housing Our Future. Housing Our Future debuted in 2019 and he recommended the Board use it as a resource moving forward.

Mr. Klippenstein discussed the “Affordable Housing Toolbox” slide and said the incentives line showed where the funding was focused and where the incentives could be focused. He opined incentives had the ability to impact a broader spectrum of the housing needs in the community. It was important to research what the soft subsidies and flexible policies were to help lower the cost of building and increase the affordability of projects. The examples of tools on the slide were all incentives that had the ability to impact all types of housing, including low-income affordable housing and workforce housing. He opined it was also important to think about how planning and zoning could impact housing affordability by increasing affordable housing anywhere on the spectrum. One example was inclusionary zoning, which were policies that either required or encouraged developers to include affordable housing for lower and moderate-income households as a set aside in any project they built. Additionally, there were things like by-right zoning versus discretionary zoning. The examples listed on the “Affordable Housing Toolbox” slide were all processes that could help decrease the cost of development and increase housing affordability throughout the entire spectrum of housing in the community.

Mr. Klippenstein observed that Qualified Census Tracts (QCT) and Difficult to Develop Areas (DDA) zones were important when it came to the LIHTC. He explained the LIHTC developed about 90 percent of affordable housing in the County because the LIHTC was more valuable in the QCT and DDA zones. This made the LIHTC a natural incentive for affordable housing developers to identify land, QCT zones, and DDA zones in order to build affordable housing. The developers received more equity from the LIHTC in the QCT and DDA zones. QCTs had a high percentage of poverty, which was how they were determined to be QCTs. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) used QCTs to ensure there were investments in quality, safe, affordable housing in low-income areas. He noted the QCT that fell in Sun Valley was one of the few QCTs in the unincorporated County. Of particular interest were the DDAs in the County, which much of the unincorporated County fell into. These were areas where it was hard to develop affordable housing due to the costs of building. HUD used DDAs to ensure there was an incentive to build low-income affordable housing in higher-income areas where there were more educational and employment opportunities. This prevented low-income affordable housing from being segregated into poor neighborhoods and ensured they had equitable access to opportunities. Considering how planning and zoning might align with areas could help the County better leverage the incentive without taking into consideration things like transportation, existing infrastructure, and geography,

Ms. Mullin continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the “Discussion Topics” slide. Ms. Mullin thought Mr. Klippenstein provided some great context and background in terms of where the County was with regard to affordable housing and the issues it faced. Through the Regional Plan, there were some requirements for each jurisdiction to address affordable housing and workforce housing in their Master Plan policies. She noted most of that activity would occur within the Cities of Sparks and Reno because those were the largest populations. The County had focused largely on the lower end of the AMI spectrum and worked with the Cares Campus and homeless services. The questions for the Board that day included: what should the County do to address broader affordability issues in the region; what should the County do to spur the creation of affordable housing; how to increase the housing supply overall because an increase overall would increase affordability; how to get normal developers to a place where it was appealing for them to create affordable housing. She opined the Board should start to answer some of those questions that day through the lens of looking at the Development Code and development processes. She acknowledged members of the Board had previously identified some areas in the Development Code where they wanted to see changes. Staff understood there were changes needed that could potentially assist with affordable housing. She noted there was no magic bullet for affordable housing; the goal was to look for ways to make a difference. She said there were many different tools to help spur not only affordable housing but housing in general. She mentioned Mr. Klippenstein’s previous statement that increasing the overall housing supply would increase affordable housing. She said staff wanted to get a better sense of where to focus their efforts. If there were certain things that were off the table, staff needed to know so they could be as efficient and effective as possible.

Ms. Mullin said she was seeking general direction from the Board about broad categories it was interested in investigating further. If the Board expressed interest in certain types of tools, staff would conduct additional research and prepare information for the Board’s review. This would come back to the Board as a future agenda item where staff would provide additional information, pros and cons, analyses, and recommendations so the Board could direct action to be taken. She informed that the Board’s interest in any tool that day did not commit the County to actually using the tool. It was simply a process to narrow down the overall range of tools staff should investigate. She reminded the tools were only for the unincorporated areas of the County. There were external constraints that could emerge in the Regional Plan or infrastructure availability, but those would be addressed in the next phase of the process. She asked if the Board was willing to establish mandates for the creation of affordable housing. Chair Hartung asked her to define mandates and what a legal mandate was. Ms. Mullin said a mandate could be something like a requirement. The County would want to make sure that if a mandate was established it was adopted by the Board and placed into the code. She explained an example could be a developer building a residential subdivision or multi-family project and being required to designate a certain percentage or ratio of units as affordable housing. Another example would be an in-lieu fee for residential or non-residential development. Chair Hartung mentioned when the County raised the cost for somebody else, then it was not affordable to them. Ms. Mullin replied that was correct and noted any of the tools could have

consequences. The County would want to understand the pros, cons, and impacts before anything was implemented.

Chair Hartung stated he was not trying to be difficult, but these were conversations he had many times with Mr. Solaro. He wondered how the County could reduce impact fees when it was not in control of the sewer system and the water. He noted those fees came from the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) and the Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (TMWRF). He said the unincorporated area of the County in Spanish Springs had very high sewer connection fees and the City of Sparks said there was no capacity for projects in that area. Mr. Solaro said Ms. Mullin would talk about the long-term discussion that would need to happen to lower impact fees because it was complicated. He mentioned reducing or eliminating the building permit fee for the County, and Chair Hartung replied it was not a large fee. Mr. Solaro affirmed that was correct, but noted there was a whole group of people who were being paid out of the Enterprise Fund. He opined that fund needed to be made whole again. Chair Hartung thought it would be helpful to understand what the fees actually were and what the County had control over. Mr. Solaro noted in some instances the fees were already subsidized. He proposed Ms. Mullin continue with her presentation regarding mandatory versus voluntary because it was a big question for the County.

Ms. Mullin acknowledged mandatory versus voluntary was a big question for the Board that day. She hoped staff could get an understanding from the Board about what its desire was, whether that be mandates, incentives, or a combination of the two. If the Board decided to provide incentives, staff would need to know what types of incentives the Board wanted to pursue. She said the “Discussion Topics” slide showed three buckets differentiated by difficulty to implement. The long-term items would have additional complexities to them. She explained she would go through each item under the buckets and identify if an item was focused on affordable housing projects, or focused on things that could impact overall housing supply and affordability. The first item, which Commissioner Clark had already brought up, was streamlining planning and permitting processes. She opined it was something that could impact supply in the overall community and there were many different things that could potentially go into that. She said it was an easy win because part of that work was already occurring on a regular basis, although it could be more focused in terms of ensuring there was a greater amount of housing.

Chair Hartung asked why the County should care beforehand about what a developer built on a lot as long as it passed inspections. Ms. Mullin explained that model masters was one example of a streamlined process that was already in place. Model masters was an option for a developer building a large subdivision. It allowed the developer to get the structural piece approved because the structural part would be repeated throughout the subdivision. This process permitted developers to return to the County in the future with a single-page site plan showing the model, instead of returning to the County for each individual site. She noted that after making sure the developer met the setbacks, the process for turnaround was very quick. Commissioner Clark proposed a group meeting with the builders in the region to get their opinions about what would help streamline the process. He believed those were the people the Board should be speaking to. Chair Hartung noted

that group would be the Builders Association of Northern Nevada (BANN) and the Board had already discussed the matter with them. Commissioner Clark wanted to hear what the builders had to say about what would help them save time and money so the savings could be passed along to the homebuyers.

Mr. Solaro said conversations were held with the developers, the Board, and the community regarding the matter. He noted Chair Hartung had touched on the issue when talking about Storey County and the success of the TRI Center. He relayed there were some things the County had tried to establish to ensure its success; however, the County was in a different position because it had neighborhoods. He recalled the Board agreed there was a need for Citizen Advisory Boards (CAB) regarding planning and building. Developers had indicated this went directly against what they were trying to accomplish because their intent was to speed up the process and CABs slowed things down. When talking about streamlining processes, he believed the Board needed to discuss things the County should not require to go through the public process. He opined staff could look at data and see which variances in the County were always upheld by all the boards and decide if a variance process was needed. Another thing to look into was the use permit process for certain things such as sewer lift stations or water storage tanks. He believed there should be a descriptive way to do those things as a concept. He believed the Board needed to look at things that should require a public process versus things that currently required a public process but provided no benefits and actually complicated the process. He informed processes were created by the County because one person complained about a group of people taking advantage of things. He felt the County was in a good place at the moment with the Development Code update because it was considering a wholesale development board update that would help put processes in place. The input he received from the developers was that the County should research what it currently required that should not be required; however, the citizens believed the County should require more input from them. He said an example of that was the neighborhood HUD process involving input from concerned citizens that was obtained before an application came through the County.

Vice Chair Hill spoke about incentives. She believed there was flexibility with the current processes. In speaking to developers over the past two years, there were serious margins the developers could make up if the County put some of the quick wins into place. She expressed excitement about all of the buckets of ideas and felt developers would take advantage of all of them. Commissioner Clark agreed and said there was nothing he would not support. Vice Chair Hill observed staff did a good job of including the developers in the Master Plan process and thought the developers should be included again before anything was brought back to the Board. Ms. Mullin asked for direction from the Board regarding whether the County should establish mandates or requirements for affordable housing. Commissioner Clark responded absolutely not because anytime restrictions were made, they got passed along to someone else which took away the idea of affordable housing. Chair Hartung indicated mandates were difficult for him to approve and he preferred incentives. Vice Chair Hill said although she would like to see the County push more on the development community, she thought incentives should be implemented first and the Board could evaluate from there. Commissioner Garcia agreed and said PSH

was discussed the previous year and this year the Board was focusing on affordable housing. She believed the first step would be implementing incentives.

Chair Hartung asked if there was a legality with mandates. Assistant District Attorney Nathan Edwards said if the Board enacted mandates, the Board would be sued. He said the County may not lose the lawsuit, but that would depend on a number of things. He informed the County would spend years in court. Chair Hartung opined incentives would be the best option. Ms. Mullin noted the Board had agreed not to impose mandates. She appreciated the direction and asked if the County should create voluntary pathways using incentives. Chair Hartung opined incentives were the best way; however, there was always a caveat. He wanted to see what those paths forward looked like because somebody would have to pay for them. He said the County was already financing certain things and it needed to figure out what the incentives looked like, who they affected, and where the money would come from. Commissioner Garcia asked for clarification about who the voluntary pathways were for. Ms. Mullin stated the County would consider whether it should create incentives either in the code or in processes to spur the creation of additional affordable housing by whichever developers were interested. Commissioner Garcia clarified that developers could research what the County was offering and choose to volunteer to pursue certain avenues. Chair Hartung noted those incentives could look different depending on infrastructure location and availability. Mr. Solaro said the discussion was whether the County should utilize money from the General Fund to cover costs, much like the AHTF might be utilized to cover costs. He acknowledged that if fees were reduced the cost still existed and somebody had to pay it, whether it be the rest of the ratepayers in a specific area or the entire community. He said staff would review connection fee studies and other similar studies and bring options to the Board. He noted the County charged less for planning fees than other jurisdictions because the other jurisdictions were capturing staff time and everything associated with that time. The County's planning fees were subsidized by the general fund, or the general taxpayers, due to the way the County's budget was set up. He explained that the policy of past boards was to spur growth within the unincorporated County. He assured staff would research options and the full cost of those options and bring that back to the Board for a decision. He noted his recommendation would be to have the incentives across the unincorporated areas.

Chair Hartung believed a deeper conversation needed to be held regarding the availability of transit in affordable housing areas. He thought it was important to identify which incentives, policies, and zoning changes were meant for affordable workforce housing and which were for affordable housing to make an effort to help people move out of the Cares Campus. Mr. Solaro said some of the actions involved both affordable housing and general housing affordability, and there were some available actions that only went with one type of housing. He asserted streamlining the planning permit process would cover both. He believed the process changes, reductions, and changes for special use permits (SUP) should apply across the board because they helped create more housing stock in the community. The entitlement process took a long time because there were many public hearings and meetings the developers had to go through. Some of that process could be changed by the County. Commissioner Garcia noted if the actions applied to everyone then it would lessen the chance that all the low-income housing would

be built in Sun Valley. Mr. Solaro replied that was correct, but there were other incentives available through HUD that could direct housing to different areas of the community that were available for federal tax credits. He noted the County would not really have a say over that unless it chose not to take the incentives in certain areas.

Chair Hartung wanted to ensure staff was working with the State to take advantage of as many State programs and projects as possible. Mr. Klippenstein said that was a fairly consistent message. Chair Hartung thought it was important to work with the State in as many ways as possible. He reiterated the \$22 million the County received for PSH could be better spent. He acknowledged he was not savvy enough to know what land was available and close enough to resources, but he opined the County could get more for its money. He thought Mr. Klippenstein would know more on the matter. Mr. Klippenstein mentioned it was a team effort. He believed the more tools the County knew about, the more it could pursue. He equated affordable housing to lasagna and said it was important to layer the tools, such as financing, grants, or incentives, to get to a good place. He thought it was much like a puzzle because even the tiny margins on low-income affordable housing benefited workforce housing and affordable housing in general. The more tools and puzzles the County put together, the better. Chair Hartung asked for clarification about “soften standards” listed under the quick wins. Ms. Mullin said that would be specific to affordable housing projects and would involve reducing or modifying certain standards, where it made sense. Chair Hartung asked what the current standards were. Ms. Mullin explained it varied to some degree, based on the specific use and product type. For example, for a single-family dwelling, the requirement was one car in a garage and another parking space on the property. She recalled a recent affordable housing project in Sun Valley where the developer requested a modification of the parking standards to be able to reduce some of the carport requirements. Chair Hartung asked if that property was located on Chocolate Drive. Ms. Mullin replied it was Red Ridges on Chocolate Drive. If softening standards that could be barriers was of interest to the Board, she would research other potential areas or standards that could be modified for affordable housing projects. Chair Hartung opined the County could say some units did not get a parking spot. He recalled when he lived in a condo many years ago he was only allowed one covered parking space. Ms. Mullin noted that was something staff could look at and mentioned another potential parameter might be the distance to transit. She said for places like Incline Village (IV) it might not be appropriate to reduce parking standards due to the lack of parking availability. She did not see anyone objecting to using incentives and marked that down as an area to pursue.

Chair Hartung commented he wanted to better understand what the streamlining of the planning process would look like. Ms. Mullin said it could be related to whether or not it was a use that required a SUP or an administrative review permit. She noted it could also be other things that could impact development. She gave the example of needing a water tank to go through a SUP public hearing process. She reminded that the topics she brought forward to the Board that day were just concepts to gauge interest. Chair Hartung said he understood the topics were more generalized but when an item was brought back to the Board, he wanted to see the things that were in the Board’s purview and those that were not. Ms. Mullin assured there would be more in-depth conversations at a later time. Chair Hartung believed it could be split into things in the Board’s purview and things

that were not. Ms. Mullin asked if the Board had an interest in streamlining. Chair Hartung responded yes and said streamlining should be an ongoing process. He believed the Development Code needed to be dealt with.

Commissioner Clark asked what the square footage was of the 50 units that were built next to the Cares Campus. Ms. Searcy said the County applied for a grant and had to build what it was awarded. The units were approximately 300 square feet. She noted there were many things on the campus that were part of the project that were not units. She was happy to have that conversation and show the Board at a later date. Commissioner Clark stated he did some math regarding the units and it was \$1,000 per square foot to build what was referred to as an affordable property. He opined a nice house in IV could be purchased for \$1,000 per square foot. He wanted it on the record that when the property was purchased, he was still the Washoe County Assessor. He felt the property was one of the most expensive properties he had seen and he asked his staff to confirm that. His staff could not find any other property in the County that cost \$1.1 million per acre. He asked how the County was helping its seniors, the disabled, and other citizens by spending that much money to build 50 units. He believed it was unconscionable and an absolute waste of money. He reminded that the money spent was real money. Ms. Olsen acknowledged this was a contentious matter and was sure that staff would address it at some point in time; however, there were only 20 minutes remaining to finish up the agenda item, and she requested the Board move on. Commissioner Clark said he had only wanted that put into perspective and stated on the record.

Ms. Mullin asked if the County should soften or relax some of its standards that could be considered barriers to the creation of affordable housing. She noted if the Board said yes that day it was not a commitment to using that tool. It was simply direction for staff to go forth and investigate further. She indicated she did not see anyone objecting to using that tool. She asked if the Board would like to use land banking as a tool and explained it was the process of using County-owned property to spur affordable housing. Chair Hartung asked for a definition of land banking. Mr. Klippenstein said land banking was a common practice around the Country where jurisdictions looked at publicly owned land that was not being utilized and assessed it for the feasibility of affordable housing development. Oftentimes, the upfront cost of land was the most difficult for affordable housing developers to secure. They could not get the land if they did not have equity on hand. Being able to secure the land up front at low or no cost was beneficial. He explained land banking was a proactive tool. It involved land that was assessed and made publicly available for developers who were interested in building affordable housing. Chair Hartung clarified it was not a suggestion that the County go out and purchase land and hold onto it. Mr. Klippenstein said it was more about what kind of assets the County held.

Attorney Edwards added land banking was a tool that was available to the Board under Chapter 244 of the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS). He advised the Board could give property to non-profits for free if the non-profits developed the land for affordable housing. He opined it was a convenient tool that tied in with what the Board was discussing. He noted the Board could buy land and bank it. Chair Hartung asked how long the County could bank the land. Attorney Edwards said there was no limit on how

long the land could be banked. Chair Hartung asked why the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) could not buy right ways and keep them for 50 years to which Attorney Edwards responded he did not know. Attorney Edwards indicated he was referring to NRS Chapter 244 which was the Board's chapter. Chair Hartung informed there were other agencies such as the RTC and TMWA that were disposing of parcels that could potentially be used by the County. He was not sure how to solve the problem but suggested there be an open channel with the other organizations so the County was aware of the parcels before they went out to bid. Mr. Klippenstein said land banking attempted to capture the proactive practice of trying to create more inventory. He said if the Board wanted him to research land banking, he would do so. Chair Hartung said he wanted land banking to be researched. He brought up the Washoe County Treasurer's rolls of land that could potentially be disposed of. He wanted to make sure the County was researching if that land was viable. Commissioner Clark believed the County should be looking at the land it owned as surplus and selling that land to developers so they could build workforce housing on it. This would benefit the County because it would put the land back on the tax rolls and it would create housing. Vice Chair Hill informed she was in support of land banking. Commissioner Garcia said she was as well. Attorney Edwards stated the NRS regarding land banking was 244.287. Ms. Mullin said she would mark land banking down as a yes.

Ms. Mullin informed the next tool was streamlining affordable housing projects further through by-right zoning. She explained that by-right zoning was pursuing the idea that if a project was an affordable housing project it would be allowed by-right. This meant it would not require a discretionary permit for a SUP or an administrative permit through a public hearing process. She noted there could be parameters, standards, or thresholds specifically around that. She stated other jurisdictions had looked at by-right zoning as a tool to be able to shorten the time frame for developers. Vice Chair Hill clarified the developers would still have to meet all of the County's requirements and the Building Code. Ms. Mullin affirmed that was correct. If the Board was interested in this tool, staff would bring forth a proposal and analysis for further action. Vice Chair Hill said she was in favor.

Ms. Mullin observed the next tool was regarding relaxing standards for accessory dwelling units (ADU). She noted the County had an advantage over some of its sister cities because it allowed for both attached and detached accessory dwellings in the County; however, there were standards and permitting requirements the County could consider relaxing. She said this would impact the housing supply overall. Chair Hartung commented people loved and hated this tool because it was for the addition of a unit onto the back of a house. Ms. Mullin thought there could be some additional constraining factors, such as properties that were on a well or a septic system. She said there would be health and safety considerations. Chair Hartung was not opposed to ADUs; however, he felt it had to be globally defined as to where and when ADUs were acceptable. He asked what relaxed standards would look like. Ms. Mullin stated that was information she could bring back to the Board at a later date.

Ms. Mullin said the items in the long-term bucket were a bit more complicated and could have additional strings and limitations attached. She noted the impact fee reductions and waivers were denoted by an asterisk because of the additional needs required to set up a program like that. If the Board wished to pursue that tool, related thresholds would have to be determined and research would need to be done to understand how the fees and funds would be made whole so the important work they were associated with could still occur. She informed this was a tool for affordable housing projects. Vice Chair Hill said this type of tool could have helped the Chocolate Drive project quite a bit. It was her understanding that the project had some delays of fees. She supported staff in bringing this tool forward. She envisioned that after the County completed the PSH projects, it would then research using the AHTF to potentially help with offsets to maintain governmental interest. Chair Hartung noted the County had done a delay of fees awhile back and said TMWA did the same thing. He recognized the need for this particular tool; however, he wanted to understand the impacts and benefits because the County had cash flow requirements. Commissioner Garcia asked why there was an asterisk next to that tool. Ms. Mullin explained it was one of the more complex tools and the asterisk was there to indicate the County could incur some type of risk. Mr. Solaro noted the Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID) had connection fees that made up the bulk of the Chocolate Drive project. He said working with other organizations complicated the process. Chair Hartung commented there were other extenuating circumstances, such as health district inspections and fire inspections. Ms. Olsen asked if the tool was something the Board wished to explore and Chair Hartung responded yes.

Ms. Mullin stated the density bonuses tool would be for affordable housing projects. She said the tool would allow affordable housing projects that were normally zoned for a certain number of units per acre to be allowed additional units per acre. Developers would get some sort of bonus in terms of the number of units per acre that could be built on the property. Staff would need to conduct additional analyses of the tool and there would be further constraints from the Regional Plan's infrastructure availability. Chair Hartung commented there would be additional constraints from area plans or a need to do plan amendments. Ms. Mullin asked if the tool was worth exploring. Chair Hartung said all the tools were worth exploring, but the Board needed more information to understand the pros and cons.

Ms. Mullin spoke about the next two tools, increasing flexibility in regulations to diversify housing types and targeted up-zoning, noting they had similarities to density bonuses and would impact availability for housing overall. She observed many people spoke about the missing middle housing that was between the multi-family apartment project and the three dwelling units per acre single-family subdivision. Increasing flexibility in regulations to diversify housing types could potentially allow additional flexibility for the construction of condos, duplexes, and townhomes. She commented the middle housing type was very much missing in unincorporated Washoe County. Chair Hartung said that housing type was not allowed in the area plans in many cases, but he thought the County had increased flexibility. He mentioned density averaging was a pet peeve of his and was seen all over the County. Ms. Mullin understood density averaging allowed developers to look at the overall parcel size and how many units were

allowed. She said increasing flexibility in regulations to diversify housing types focused more specifically on other types of housing products. Vice Chair Hill thought it was important the community understood that a house could look like a normal house but have four units in it. She opined people did not want a giant apartment building next to their single-family home, but there were different types of units that could be cleverly designed and allow for more density. She said there were a lot of duplexes and ADUs in her neighborhood, but they were permitted in the past so people did not notice them. Ms. Mullin believed Vice Chair Hill was referring to form-based zoning. She thought it might be something the County could put in the code, but staff would need to investigate the regulations further. She explained that currently some of the regulatory zones allowed one density if the property was a single-family dwelling and a different density if the property was an attached housing product.

Chair Hartung thought what Ms. Mullin was describing already existed. He recalled being accused of allowing Section 8 housing in Spanish Springs next to the Cascades of the Sierra project. He said the project was a senior affordable housing project under the heading of transitional housing. He noted transitional housing was greatly needed in the County. He believed the County had allowed five or seven dwelling units per acre for that project. He thought increasing flexibility in regulations to diversify housing types was a difficult tool. Vice Chair Hill opined the tool just needed to be codified. Chair Hartung said the tool needed to be researched and noted people would be angry about it. Ms. Mullin stated the County would likely get substantial community input regarding any of the tools. Commissioner Garcia was supportive of the diversification of housing units and thought it was much needed throughout the region. She recalled the slides in the presentation depicting housing that first-year teachers and warehouse workers could afford. She believed young professionals and recent college graduates who were trying to establish young families were a growing segment of the population. She said the notion of the American dream with a single-family home was so ingrained in people and it was not a reality because the County was running out of space. She believed the County needed to start changing the narrative. Ms. Mullin noted she had heard a couple of yes responses from the Board. Chair Hartung said he was not disagreeing with it, but he was undecided on that tool. He commented it depended on where the tool would be used. Ms. Mullin informed that would be part of the additional information staff brought back to the Board. Chair Hartung opined Commissioners Clark and Herman, who were former real estate agents, would understand that location was everything.

Ms. Mullin said the last tool to discuss was targeted up-zoning. That particular tool involved examining certain areas within the unincorporated County where it would be appropriate to up-zone to allow for greater density. This could be based on things such as the property being near higher-density development, in a long transit corridor, or the property being in one of the QCT areas. She noted that targeted up-zoning was distinct from most of the zoning changes because typically when there was a zoning change request it was because the property owner requested it. This tool would involve the County, as a jurisdiction, proactively looking at places where up-zoning made sense. Chair Hartung noted the Cities of Sparks and Reno had transit-oriented development (TOD), and he asked if the County did as well. Ms. Mullin believed Sun Valley used to have TODs.

She said the cities had moved away from the TOD terminology. She clarified a TOD was an area where transit was available, and it was an example of an area where targeted up-zoning could happen. Vice Chair Hill informed it was an area near commercial property. Ms. Mullin said it would also be near mixed-use properties. Chair Hartung said he might be okay with this tool. Commissioner Garcia noted she was not very familiar with this tool. Ms. Mullin noted she would mark the tool as a maybe and it would be a lower priority than the tools that were identified as a yes. She commented she received all the direction she needed from the Board. Commissioner Clark opined all of the tools should be researched based on the particular parcel. He believed all the tools should have been in place a long time ago. Having been involved in a CAB, the Planning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), Chair Hartung said updating area plans was a challenge. Vice Chair Hill agreed. Ms. Olsen asked if the Board gave direction on the last topic. The Board agreed the last topic was a yes.

Vice Chair Hill asked about discussion topic three regarding the tools being applied Countywide or only in targeted areas. She explained the Washoe Tahoe partnership and community members had done a lot of work on policies. She wondered if those policies were brought to the Board, could they be implemented as part of the topics discussed that day. She noted the policies would be a bit different because of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). Ms. Mullin asked if Vice Chair Hill was referring to different incentives. Vice Chair Hill clarified the Washoe Tahoe policy recommendations were being finalized and she believed the recommendations included the topics the Board discussed that day, but she was not aware of all of the policy recommendations. She wanted to ensure if those policies did not fall into one of the tools mentioned that day, that the policies could still be considered by the Board. Mr. Solaro said staff wanted to bring that whole study before the board to talk about concepts specific to the Tahoe area because it was a bit different than what the County was trying to do in its unincorporated areas. He believed there were some identified concepts that were potentially more appropriate for the Tahoe area but could work in the unincorporated County. He acknowledged the Board was comfortable with staff exploring all kinds of different incentives for affordable housing in the unincorporated County. He noted staff would bring those concepts forward.

Mr. Solaro continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the “Guiding Principles” slide. He notified the Board that staff was going through the Master Plan process and the guiding principles were listed on this slide. The Planning Commission would hear an update on the guiding principles in February or March. He believed each Commissioner was briefed individually on the guiding principles. He pointed out the second guiding principle, “strengthen access to housing,” and noted that was what the Board had discussed that day. He said all of the discussions held that day fit well within the guiding principles for the Master Plan update. The draft of the Master Plan update should be available that summer for publication.

Ms. Olsen explained her notes were just headlines and that there were more notes than what she had displayed. The teams had direction and would come back to the Board with specifics and more details. She noted the Board was, overall, in support of the regional effort that was underway for dispatch. For sustainability, the Board wanted to set

the 2050 goal in alignment with the State, but the milestones along the way would be set by the County. The Board agreed to look at the easy-to-accomplish tasks for the fleet and she believed Technology Services IT Manager Quinn Korbolic had some pragmatic and practical approaches related to that. There was broad support for pursuing opportunities related to addressing equity in the County. The Board had agreed to pursue the staff recommendations related to new technology and staffing in preparation for the 2024 elections. The Board was not in favor of mandates for affordable housing, but there was broad-reaching support for incentives. Those incentives would be applied Countywide where appropriate. She asked if that was all correct.

Chair Hartung opined the Board had to be careful about instituting things Countywide. Manager Brown opined that related to Vice Chair Hill’s question about changes. He asked if the Board was supportive of changes on a less than Countywide basis. Chair Hartung thought it was a difficult decision and recalled when the County tried to put District 2 into conformance with itself by adding low-density suburban (LDS) 2 into that area plan, which was two dwelling units per acre. Commissioner Garcia noted item number two on the “Discussion Topics” slide indicated the tools would be investigated and brought to the Board for further consideration. She asked if Chair Hartung was comfortable having staff do the work and bring the information back to the Board. Chair Hartung warned the Board there would be issues when staff brought back the information because people would be upset. Ms. Olsen asked if there was any additional direction the Board wished to give and Chair Hartung replied there was not. Ms. Mullin recalled the additional restraints that were discussed relating to the Regional Plan and whether it involved infrastructure availability, well, septic, or other things. She noted those would all be part of the conversation when the matter came back to the Board. Mr. Solaro said appropriateness would be discussed when staff brought the matter to the Board. Vice Chair Hill noted QCTs and DDAs played into the matter as well.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Vice Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Items 6A through 6E be directed.

23-0063 AGENDA ITEM 8 Announcements/Reports.

Vice Chair Hill thanked the Board, County Manager Eric Brown, and staff. She noted it took a lot of work to put together the workshop and she thanked everyone for the great day.

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4:04 p.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

VAUGHN HARTUNG, Chair
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared by:
Evonne Strickland, Deputy County Clerk*