

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

AUGUST 15, 2023

PRESENT:

Alexis Hill, Chair
Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair
Michael Clark, Commissioner
Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner
Clara Andriola, 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 regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, Deputy County Clerk Lauren Morris called roll and the Board conducted the following business:

23-0500 AGENDA ITEM 3 Announcements/Reports.

County Manager Eric Brown announced there were upcoming openings for the Washoe County Audit Committee, the Building Enterprise Fund Advisory Committee (BEFAC), the Library Board of Trustees (LBT), the Board of Equalization (BOE), and the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund Board.

Vice Chair Herman asked that Item 15 be pulled from the agenda and expressed consternation regarding the item's Staff Report.

Commissioner Clark declared he had tried for several months to schedule a tour of the Cares Campus and was informed that it was too dangerous due to ongoing construction. When he was finally able to tour the campus, he did not notice any dangerous areas in the facility. He remarked the airport had been under construction for several years and thousands of people were permitted to travel through the building daily. He requested that Manager Brown, a staff member from the District Attorney's (DA) Office, and a construction foreman or superintendent tour the Cares Campus with him and point out conditions that could be deemed dangerous. He noted there were several hundred people living at the Cares Campus. He thought this was an example of the Office of the County Manager (OCM) taking away access the Commissioners should have.

Commissioner Clark expressed condolences to the family of Mr. Oliver X.

Commissioner Clark reported that on July 28, Community Outreach Coordinator Marc De La Torre emailed him regarding his request for the Board to host one evening meeting a month. Mr. De La Torre informed Commissioner Clark his request had been denied by Chair Hill. Commissioner Clark recalled Commissioner Garcia's comment during a previous Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting when she mentioned most of her constituents were unable to attend BCC meetings due to their work schedules. He said those comments spurred his idea for evening meetings and he wanted the item to be placed on an agenda. He pointed out there was a new system that allowed people to submit electronic comments (EComments). He did not think this was a replacement for hearing people's concerns in person. He opined the First Amendment made the United States (US) the greatest Country in the world. He expressed excitement for Items 4C2 and 10.

Commissioner Garcia wished the Washoe County School District (WCSD) a wonderful 2023 to 2024 school year. She informed that the WCSD served more than 60,000 students and 3,500 staff at over 100 different locations. She expressed appreciation for the communication that went out regarding pedestrian safety and slowing down in school zones. She reported the tragic passing of a Washoe County staff member and relayed that County staff set up a GoFundMe for his family. She challenged those listening to help the County meet its goal of raising \$10,000 for the family.

Commissioner Clark stated a sock hop for seniors would take place on Tuesday, August 22, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Sparks Parks and Recreation Gym located at 98 Richards Way.

Chair Hill declared that Mr. X was a shining light in the arts community and expressed her condolences to his family. She thanked Commissioner Garcia for mentioning the GoFundMe for Ryan Robison's family.

Chair Hill asked Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nate Edwards if the Board needed a motion to formally remove Item 15 from the agenda at Vice Chair Herman's request to which he responded no. ADA Edwards pointed out that Vice Chair Herman's resolution was one of the exhibits and the item was styled to adopt the proposed resolution with or without changes. Chair Hill inquired if Vice Chair Herman would still like to pull the item to which she responded yes.

DONATIONS

23-0501 **4A1** Recommendation to accept cash donations totaling \$17,797.70: [\$377.00 from Bowers Mansion Iron Rangers]; [\$17,400.00 Lazy 5 Summer Music Series Sponsorships]; [\$20.70 from the donation drop box at the May Museum]; and accept in-kind donations from May Arboretum Society [valued at \$18,330.71] for Regional Parks and Open Space programs and facilities; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the appropriate budget amendments. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

- 23-0502** **4B1** Recommendation to approve the acceptance of a donation of 50 Narcan Kits to treat and prevent possible opioid overdoses by community members served by the Washoe County Department of Juvenile Services [estimated value \$3,750] donated by Quest Counseling and Consulting Inc. Juvenile Services. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0503** **4C1** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$8,099.36]; and (2) accept donations from various donors to Washoe County Human Services Agency Child Protective Services Fund to support the needs of the children in care and families who are clients in the amount of [\$11,069.07] retroactive for the period April 16, 2023 through June 30, 2023; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0504** **4C2** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$20,487.00]; and (2) accept donations from various donors to the Human Services Agency - Senior Services Fund used to support seniors in our community in the amount of [\$3,320.05] retroactive for the period April 16, 2023 through June 30, 2023; and direct the Comptroller to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0505** **4C3** Recommendation to accept various items, such as hygiene products and snacks, donated to Washoe County Human Services Agency Homelessness Fund to support the needs of the homeless retroactive for the period April 16, 2023 through June 30, 2023 totaling an estimated market value of [\$4,550.00]. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0506** **4D1** Recommendation to accept a donation of approximately 100 dog beds of various sizes and feeding bowls, as well as monetary donations in the amount of [\$3,640.57] to Washoe County Regional Animal Services retroactive for the period April 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023, from numerous donors (see attached list), to be used for the humane care and treatment of sick and/or injured, stray, abandoned, or at-risk animals received; express appreciation for these thoughtful contributions; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Regional Animal Services. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0507** **4E1** Recommendation to accept a donation of [\$500.00] from Rotary Club of Incline Village to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office for the Citizen Corps Program (CCP), including funds to be used for food purchases & operating supplies, and, if approved, authorize Comptroller's Office to make appropriate budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

On the call for public comment, Ms. Janet Butcher declared she was not paid to be present at meetings and did not represent any organization. She said she commented because she cared about what was happening in the community. She remarked that for many years she worked 18-hour days to complete projects. She stated she now had the ability to keep an eye on the takeover of the constitutional republic. Chair Hill asked her to direct her comments to this item. Ms. Butcher said she appreciated the donation of Narcan but thought the community needed to get to the bottom of the opioid issue.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Items 4A1 through 4E1 be accepted.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 5A1 THROUGH 5J2

- 23-0508** **5A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' regular meetings of June 20, 2023, and June 27, 2023. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0509** **5A2** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Monthly Statements/Reports; Executed Contracts. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0510** **5B1** Recommendation to accept the Fund for a Resilient Nevada Sub-Award from the Department of Health and Human Services, Director's Office for the amount not to exceed [\$182,560.00; no County match required] retroactive to June 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 to be used to fund treatment and recovery support services for participants of the Department of Alternative Sentencing Support in Treatment, Accountability and Recovery (STAR) program, to include leasing a recovery house including a live-in house manager, covering the cost of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services, and bus passes for participant transportation; authorize a subgrant agreement for housing services between Washoe County Department of Alternative Sentencing and Life Changes, Inc. in an amount not to exceed [\$90,078.00], approve Resolution necessary for same; and if approved, authorize Chief Roper to execute grant award documents and authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the subgrant agreement; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Alternative Sentencing. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0511** **5C1** Recommendation to adopt a new list of qualified General Appraisers pursuant to Nevada Revised Statute 244.2795 and resulting from Request for Qualifications #3201-23 and #3218-23, to conduct appraisals of real property purchases contemplated by Washoe County and to conduct appraisals of real property offered for sale or lease by Washoe County,

following the process outlined in Ordinance 1291. The proposed list of qualified General Appraisers include: Anthony J. Wren, Anthony J. Wren and Associates; Gary G. Young, Granite Appraisal Group; Lynn C. Barnett, Lynn Barnett and Associates; Thomas D. Baroch, CBRE, Inc.; Stephen Parent, CBRE, Inc.; Mark Stafford, Mark Stafford Real Estate Appraiser; Janelle Wright, Nellie Beck, LLC.; Robert E. Barnes, The Property Sciences Group Inc.; Bradford Thompson; Peter Scott Voltz, Voltz Commercial Realty Advisors, Inc.; James R. Perkins, Johnson Perkins Griffin; Scott Q. Griffin, Johnson Perkins Griffin; Carson T. Cooke, Johnson Perkins Griffin. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

- 23-0512** **5D1** Recommendation to acknowledge receipt of the 41st consecutive annual Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for the County’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022. Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0513** **5E1** Recommendation to accept a FY23 Representative Payee sub-grant award amendment from the State of Nevada, Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) in the amount of [\$10,547.33; \$1,582.00 county match] retroactive from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 to provide money management and supportive case management to eligible individuals aged 60 or older in Washoe County; and authorize the Acting Director of Human Services Agency to execute retroactively the sub-grant award. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0514** **5E2** Recommendation to accept a FY24 Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) sub-grant award from the State of Nevada, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) in the amount of [\$112,000.00; no county match] retroactive from October 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024 to support Training and Technical Assistance for implementation of the Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START); START pilot project evaluation; and provide substance use disorder (SUD)/Co-Occurring Disorder (COD) evaluations and assessments for parent participants; authorize the Acting Director of the Human Services Agency to execute the grant award documents; and direct the Comptroller’s Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0515** **5E3** Recommendation to accept an Office of Victim Crimes Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Emergency and Transitional Pet Shelter and Housing Assistance grant award from the U.S. Department of Justice in the amount of [\$100,000.00; no county match] retroactive from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2025, the purpose of the grant is to support domestic violence victims and their pets when they seek safety away from the abuser through

Our Place Shelter; authorize the Acting Director of Human Services to execute the grant award retroactively and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

23-0516 **5E4** Recommendation to accept a FY24 Representative Payee sub-grant award from the State of Nevada, Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) in the amount of [\$80,400.00; \$12,060.00 county match] retroactive from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 to provide money management and supportive case management to eligible individuals aged 60 or older in Washoe County; retroactively authorize the ADSD approved designee for the Acting Director of the Human Services Agency to execute the grant award documents; and direct the Comptroller's office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

23-0517 **5E5** Recommendation to appoint Mac Rossi [Alternate] to the Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board for the remainder of the term ending August 31, 2025; and recommendation to appoint Patricia Gallimore [Alternate] to the Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board for the remainder of the term ending June 30, 2025; and recommendation to appoint Adolfo Correa to District 2 for the term ending September 1, 2027. Mr. Rossi will be filling the seat vacated by Casey Reed who moved from her Alternate role to District 4. Ms. Gallimore will be filling the seat vacated by May Ann McCauley who moved from her Alternate role to District 5. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

23-0518 **5F1** Recommendation to approve and accept Federal 2023 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant-In-Aid Award funds from the State of Nevada to the Washoe County Library System in the amount of \$75,000.00 [\$7,698.00 County match] for a retroactive term of July 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024 for the purchase of a bookmobile to expand and improve library outreach services to Washoe County residents in various areas of the County; if approved to authorize the Library Director to sign the grant award documents necessary to receive the funding; if approved to authorize the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary amendments to the Washoe County Library System's Fiscal Year 24 budget to reflect the receipt and use of the grant funds. Library. (All Commission Districts.)

23-0519 **5G1** Recommendation to accept a 2024 Nevada State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), United We Stand (UWS) grant for [\$38,000.00, no County match required]. The UWS grant is intended to improve state and local government planning, training, and response capabilities to react to Acts of Terrorism. Grant Term is retroactive to July 20, 2023, through June 30, 2024. If approved, authorize the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Chair to execute grant documents and authorize the County

Manager or his designee to sign the Washoe County Sub-Grant Agreements between Washoe County and the Sparks Police Department, per NRS 244.1505 in the amount of [\$17,762.50] for ten (10) Colt LE M4A3 rifles with accessories; and Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), per NRS 244.1505, in the amount of [\$20,237.50] for twenty-four (24) Ballistic Plates and forty-eight (48) Ballistic Plate Carriers: approve Resolution necessary for same; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the appropriate budget amendments. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

23-0520 **5G2** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, Commission District Special Fund disbursement in the amount of [\$1,000.00] for Fiscal Year 2023-2024; District 1 Commissioner Alexis Hill recommends a [\$1,000.00] grant to the Tahoe Fund – a non-profit organization that is organized for charitable, religious, or educational purposes -- to support the 2023 Lake Tahoe Summit; approve Resolution necessary for same; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary disbursement of funds. Manager's Office. (Commission District 1.)

23-0521 **5G3** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, Commission District Special Fund disbursement in the amount of [\$5,000.00] for Fiscal Year 2023-2024; District Commissioner Mariluz Garcia recommends a [\$5,000.00] grant to Noah's Animal House -- a nonprofit organization created for religious, charitable or educational purposes – to support the organization's mission to provide on-site pet shelter and care for victims of domestic violence; approve Resolution necessary for same; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary disbursement of funds. Manager's Office. (Commission District 3.)

23-0522 **5H1** Recommendation to accept a Grant Award from the Humane Society of the United States in the amount of [\$500.00; no County match] retroactive to August 1, 2023 through July 31, 2024, to support shelter animal enrichment; authorize the Director of Regional Animal Services to execute the Grant Agreement; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Regional Animal Services. (All Commission Districts.)

23-0523 **5I1** Recommendation to approve the Wells Fargo non-corporate banking resolution updating the authorized signatories for the inmate commissary accounts on behalf of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office and authorize the Sheriff or his designee to make future updates to the commissary account(s) in order to meet the intent of NRS 211.360. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

- 23-0524** **5I2** Recommendation to accept a Justice Assistance Grant award [amount not to exceed \$7,000.00, no County match required] as administered through the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety Office, Office of Criminal Justice Assistance, to cover the cost of training and travel associated with the training for the Special Operations Division, for the retroactive grant period of February 7, 2023 through September 30, 2023 and if approved, direct Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0525** **5I3** Recommendation to accept the 2022 High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Northern Nevada Interdiction Task Force funding from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) as administered through Las Vegas Metro Police Department [amount not to exceed \$82,000.00, no County match required] to be used for overtime, investigative and travel expenses from HIDTA for the retroactive period of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023, and direct Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0526** **5I4** Recommendation to acknowledge Receipt of Status Report of Commissary Fund set up per NRS 211.360 to be utilized for the welfare and benefit of the inmates for items such as counseling, chaplaincy services, vocational training, and certifications programs for inmates in the jail, submitted by the Washoe County Sheriff's Office Commissary Committee for Second Quarter for Fiscal Year 2023. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0527** **5I5** Recommendation to accept the 2024 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) [amount not to exceed \$7,365.00, no County Match required] as administered through the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services Division of Child Family Services, to be used to pay conference registration fees, travel and training costs for the WCSO Victim Advocate, and to provide emergency housing funds and emergency services such gift cards for food, fuel, clothing, cell phones, cell phone minutes and hygiene products for victims of violent crimes for the retroactive grant period of July 1, 2023 - July 31, 2024, and if approved direct Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0528** **5J1** Recommendation to accept Treasurer's status report for the period ending July 31, 2023, of payment of refunds and interest since last update in the amount of \$85,041.72 on certain property tax overpayments for residential properties at Incline Village/Crystal Bay, in compliance with the October 21, 2019 Order issued by the District Court in Village League to Save Incline Assets, Inc., et.al. vs. State of Nevada, et.al., Case No. CV03-06922, as modified and clarified by the settlement agreement regarding the processing of refunds. Treasurer. (All Commission Districts.)

23-0529 **5J2** Recommendation to approve and adopt the revised Washoe County Investment Policies that contain general guidelines for investing the financial assets of Washoe County by the County's delegated Investment Officers, as recommended by the Washoe County Investment Committee. Treasurer. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Clark thanked staff for reopening the application process for Item 5C1 to obtain more bids. He thought it was good to see that list grow so the County could have the best firms doing appraisal work. He stated appraisals were opinion-based and could change at a moment's notice. He spoke about Item 5E5 and expressed appreciation that new people were being appointed to the Senior Services Advisory Board (SSAB). He noted that was a volunteer position and the people who volunteered were passionate about their community and helping seniors.

Chair Hill congratulated staff for receiving the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. She commended the library system for receiving a \$75,000 grant for library services and technology. She thanked Commissioner Garcia for allocating \$5,000 from her Commission District Special Funds to Noah's Animal House.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Elvira Diaz provided a document that was distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. Ms. Diaz stated she was a Senior Civic Engagement Organizer for the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN). She expressed support for drag queen story hour (DQSH). She applauded the dedication of librarians and the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) in Washoe County. Chair Hill asked Ms. Diaz which item she was addressing to which Ms. Diaz responded Item 5F1. Ms. Diaz thought it was important to create inclusive spaces where all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds, felt welcomed and valued. She opined that DQSH served as a space where young minds had the chance to engage with a variety of human experiences and could learn about empathy, acceptance, and the importance of embracing differences. She asserted the community must continue to stand up for those values by ensuring that DQSH had a place in Washoe County.

Mr. Ilya Arbatman was not present when called to speak.

Mr. William T. Steward spoke about Item 5G2. He said the second anniversary of the Caldor fire recently occurred, and he thought communities could be better prepared for fires by being proactive and creating defensible space. He declared there was a lot of helpful information the community had access to. He mentioned the recent fire in Maui, Hawaii, where strong wind gusts caused the fire to spread at a rapid pace. He noted Nevada regularly experienced wind gusts like those in Maui. He claimed the creation of a firewise community was the best way to prepare for fires. He suggested the County do a better job of educating the public on emergency protocols.

Mr. Chris Daniels supported the bookmobile and the approval of funds for the library to increase accessibility. He declared services such as the bookmobile connected members of the community and provided life-saving resources. He claimed reading

possessed power and transformative capabilities. He pointed out that citizens could not always travel to libraries, and he thought bookmobiles were a good way to reach more people in the community.

Ms. Grace Potorti expressed support for the bookmobile and DQSH. She listed examples of actors who had appeared on screen in drag throughout the years. She declared libraries were crucial to educating people. She did not want history to be erased. She said the hate towards DQSH needed to end. She recalled a recent DQSH event she attended where her grandson was approached by a woman who told him he was going to hell. Chair Hill asked her to direct her comments to this item. Ms. Potorti stated the library should receive all the funds it needed. She did not think there should be restrictions on what people could read and opined people's First Amendment rights included books.

Ms. Kit Miller spoke in support of Item 5F1. She thought it was important for rural areas of the County to get information and books that were not censored. She supported people who took the time to read to children in public libraries. She expressed concern regarding people's opposition to DQSH and hoped the libraries could be kept free of censorship and hate.

Ms. Valerie Fiannaca claimed Item 5B1 was imperative to the community. She opined the only way forward was to bring stability back to families through sobriety and jobs. She declared more funding was necessary to control drug abuse in the community.

Ms. Penny Brock declared she was not representing any organization. She spoke about Item 5J2 and the Investment Committee. She pointed out that Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) stated investment losses were not to be greater than the income. In looking at the reports since the previous year, she noted the losses were greater than the income which was a violation of NRS. She asked the Board to investigate the issue and suggested an audit of County investments be conducted.

Ms. Patricia Gallimore stated she was the President of the Reno-Sparks National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She pointed out that Item 5E5 was a recommendation to appoint her to the SSAB. She wanted to be on the SSAB to represent people who looked like her. She was the co-chair of the health committee and sat on other advisory boards in the community including the Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition (NMHEC), Northern Nevada HOPES (HOPES), and the Nevada Alliance for Retired Americans (NARA). She was a retired senior citizen who wanted to ensure her community continued to thrive.

Mr. Mac Rossi mentioned Item 5E5 which, if approved, would appoint him to the SSAB. He mentioned another item on the Consent Agenda that would implement a disaster evacuation program by the end of September.

Ms. Tracey Thomas provided a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She appreciated the funds being donated to seniors. She spoke about the Tahoe Fund and mentioned that Silver Flume indicated the organization did not solicit donations, but its website suggested differently. She wondered if James Porter was any relation to the Porter Group which was retained by the County to do its lobbying. She stated funds appropriated through Commission District Special Funds had to provide substantial benefits to the County and she wondered if the Tahoe Fund met that requirement. She suggested Item 5G2 be pulled. She discussed Item 5G3 and reported that the business license for Noah's Animal House was in default. She thought the item should be pulled until the organization had the chance to get this taken care of. She did not understand how staff could claim there was no fiscal impact from investment policy because the County had been losing money on investments.

Ms. Elise Weatherly spoke about the library system and suggested the Board allocate funds to her so she could write books about her personal experiences.

Commissioner Clark stated he met with the appointees for Item 5E5 and looked forward to working with them. He suggested the senior center be remodeled to include showers and laundry facilities to make it a more vibrant place for its guests. He noted the Cares Campus provided three free meals per day for its patrons, but seniors were charged for meals at the senior center. He thought the County should provide free meals to seniors.

Commissioner Garcia thanked everyone who came in to speak on various items. She pointed out there were a lot of comments through SpeakUp, and she appreciated that commenters were able to participate remotely.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 5A1 through 5J2 be approved. Any and all Resolutions pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 5A1 through 5J2 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

23-0530 **AGENDA ITEM 6** Presentation by Evelyn Grosenick, Public Defender, and Marc Picker, Alternate Public Defender, to give an update on new positions in the Public Defender's and Alternate Public Defender's Offices and their impact on the respective departments and the community.

Alternate Public Defender (APD) Marc Picker conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: History of APD Office; Current APD Office; Open Justice Court Cases June 2020 to June 2023; Open Specialty Court Cases; Cases Received from Public Defender's Office 202-2023; Monthly/Yearly Court Appearances 2023-2023; Effect of Adding Off-Cycle Staff (4 slides); Washoe County Alternate Public Defender.

Mr. Picker stated the APD's Office was created as an offshoot of the Public Defender's (PD) Office 17 years prior. It was an effort to reduce costs arising from private attorney services on conflict cases and provide better legal services to indigent populations. He became the APD in 2017, at which time the office contained 10 attorneys, 2 investigators, and 5 legal secretaries. He reported the office currently had 15 attorneys, 2 investigators, and 8 legal secretaries and support staff. The office represented people in criminal cases, including misdemeanors, death penalty, parental rights, and juvenile cases. He noted the APD represented participants in District Court and Specialty Court, which could include representation in Adult Drug Court, Mental Health Court, Veterans Treatment Court, and Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Court.

Mr. Picker reported growing case numbers and said the mid-cycle addition of one attorney had alleviated each attorney's caseload from more than 200 to less than 100. However, this was still more than the American Bar Association's (ABA) recommendation of fewer than 60 active felony cases per attorney at a time. He disclosed there were 31 jury trials in 2019 (8 civil, 17 criminal, and 6 short) and 23 jury trials in 2020 (7 civil, 15 criminal, and 1 short) when the courts were reopening after COVID-19 (C19). In 2023, there had been 60 jury trials (5 civil and 55 criminal) so far. He posited these numbers reflected the County's need for proper funding of indigent defense. He announced indigent defense was constitutionally mandated and explained the three interrelated facets of criminal justice: prosecution, defense, and incarceration. He said both the PD's Office and APD's Office had attempted to illustrate the interrelated nature of these facets. Although their offices' missions were not popular, they were legally necessary and morally sound. He stated they were committed to helping people who found themselves in challenging life situations. He affirmed that continued support was necessary to help the office fulfill its purpose and invited the Board to visit the APD's Office.

Public Defender Evelyn Grosenick conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Constitutional Mandate (2 slides); What We Do (2 slides); Staff Composition; Divisions; Cases Received; Trends (2 slides); New Positions; 3 Attorneys; Felony Team Composition (3 slides); Paralegal; Category A Felony Team; Moving Forward.

Ms. Grosenick thanked the Board for granting the PD's Office three new attorneys and one paralegal position in December 2022 and said they also received an Office Specialist (OS) position in the recent fiscal cycle. She reiterated Mr. Picker's point that the office's services were constitutionally mandated. She explained that the constitutional right to legal representation had been expanded through case law, including the foundational 1963 case *Gideon v. Wainwright*. The PD's Office began in 1969 in response to that case. *Gideon v. Wainwright* established rights to counsel in criminal actions where liberty was jeopardized and dictated government obligation to provide effective representation. She recounted the PD's mission statement and stated they were the largest provider of indigent defense in Northern Nevada. She pointed out that the office's focus on holistic defense supported Washoe County's objective to serve vulnerable populations. She defined holistic defense as helping vulnerable populations with holistic life improvement strategies, not just criminal defense.

Ms. Grosenick reported her office currently had 74 employees, including 45 attorneys, 8 investigators, 18 support staff, 1 paralegal, 1 mitigation specialist, and 1 information technologist (IT). She shared the Adult Criminal Division was the office's largest and contained a misdemeanor team, six felony teams, and a Category A felony team. The office also had a Family Division that represented individuals in Reno Justice Court (RJC), Specialty Courts, RJC's court assistance programs, and Sparks Recovery Court. She announced Reno's Second Judicial District Court was developing a Competency Court that would be staffed by her office. She also presented information about the Juvenile Division and said that prior to Nevada's recent legislative session, her office represented juveniles listed as adverse parties in temporary protective order (TPO) proceedings. She remarked that the Appellate Division received assistance from the APD's Office. She explained Office Support Specialists (OSSs) helped with client contact and Investigators helped fulfill the office's mandate to provide effective representation. She noted the office had begun collecting information about reopened cases, as those had been reappointed to their office after being closed out, which significantly increased their workload following C19.

Ms. Grosenick announced the PD's representation in juvenile cases had more than doubled since 2021, from approximately 400 to over 1,000 in 2022. She attributed their increased representation in family court cases to Specialty Court participation, family court attorneys' competency with assisted outpatient services, and Competency Court staffing. She indicated appeal cases were expected to increase to match numbers of jury trials. She warned against confusing correlation with causation regarding data but advised that C19 created criminal justice system backlogs. She said warrant cases had resurfaced over the last two years and cited Washoe County's 2 percent population increase since 2020. She mentioned the recent need for the PD's Office, APD's Office, and District Attorney's (DA) Office to upgrade their case management systems, as the previous system was no longer vendor-supported. She shared that the transition had caused some internal issues. She stated the PD's Office was not a standalone County entity, as it was part of the criminal justice system. Therefore, any changes had interconnected effects.

Ms. Grosenick discussed that approaching the Board for more resources always stemmed from a true need, as they ran a lean office. She noted the three new attorney positions were added to their felony team and mentioned each District Court department contained two attorneys. She said the new paralegal position was assigned to the Category A felony team and commended the impact this had. This also mitigated impacts from a Category A felony team staff decrease over the previous year. She stated the team's priorities moving forward were training, policy and procedure evaluation, efficiency, and growth. She thanked the Board for its resource allocation and advised potential future resources were necessary to address growing jury trial occurrences.

Commissioner Clark thanked Mr. Picker and Ms. Grosenick for their offices' services and highlighted their interconnected nature as well as his support.

Commissioner Andriola asked Mr. Picker the current average caseload of each attorney at the APD's Office. Mr. Picker reported an average caseload of 90 to 95. He stated the PD's Office had two DAs for each department in the Second Judicial District

Court, but the APD's Office had different amounts. They previously had one attorney for every two departments, but since the recent increase in resources, they had almost one attorney per department.

Commissioner Andriola asked Ms. Grosenick if she had observed specific case category increases that contributed to overall juvenile case increases. Ms. Grosenick advised that schools reopening, increased school populations and school police, and increased juvenile gang activity could possibly explain the increase.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Mr. Picker and Ms. Grosenick for their work and for upholding the County's constitutional responsibilities. Vice Chair Herman also thanked Mr. Picker and Ms. Grosenick for their work.

Chair Hill expressed appreciation for the holistic perspectives incorporated into the presentations and asked if there were actions the Board could take to support holistic defense efforts. She mentioned the potential the offices possessed to help people. Mr. Picker described observations shared by him and Ms. Grosenick that a participant rarely did not possess either mental health issues, substance abuse issues, or both. He spoke about challenges in separating the cause of those issues and stated earlier interaction from their offices provided increased participant benefits. Ms. Grosenick highlighted current County initiatives that increased access to substance abuse and mental health treatments. She shared her belief that those programs helped prevent individuals from entering the criminal justice system.

23-0531 **AGENDA ITEM 7** Presentation and Update on FY 22/23 Fourth Quarter Status Report for the Washoe County Regional Detention Facility to include security of the jail, conditions of confinement, staffing and medical care of inmates housed at the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) Detention Division Chief Deputy Corey Solferino conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: COVID-19 (C19); Washoe County Detention Facility Health Risk; Welfare of the Inmates; Welfare of Inmates, 4th Quarter; Welfare of Inmates (2 slides); Medical Information; NaphCare Medical Data (2 slides); ADP; Average Length of Stay; FY 22/23 4th Quarter Jail Data; Inmate Assistance Program; SNAP; Staffing Update; What Would the BCC like to See in Future Quarterly Reports.

Chief Deputy Solferino thanked the Board and disclosed he was the newly transferred Division Chief for the Detention Center. He introduced Detention Operations Captain Andrew Barrett Venn. He mentioned the increase in C19's new variant and commended Captain Venn's actions in his previous position as a Sergeant in the Inmate Management Unit (IMU) during C19. He reported there were no current C19 cases at the detention facility, but testing and vaccines were still available at the infirmary.

Chief Deputy Solferino announced that US Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, Washoe County Sheriff Darin Balaam, Carson City Sheriff Ken Furlong, and Reno Police Department (RPD) Deputy Chief Oliver Miller hosted a press conference at the WCSO the previous day to discuss Statewide and national fentanyl issues. He spoke about fentanyl mitigation efforts at the detention facility and highlighted fentanyl's lethal nature. From April to June 2023, there were six suspected fentanyl overdoses, none of which were fatal. He announced Sheriff Balaam had outfitted the facility with Narcan kits and stated each officer was trained in recognizing overdose symptoms.

Chief Deputy Solferino shared he was unaware of the Getting Out While Getting Ahead (GAGO) program until his promotion. He referenced education's overwhelming and statistically proven impact on recidivism. He expressed his regard for the GAGO program and pointed out it was headed by the facility's chaplain program. He noted Sheriff Balaam's intended second-term focus on detention facility programming and wraparound services. He advised that programming presented a financial incentive for the facility, which was beneficial but not a primary motivation, and stated GAGO had been implemented less than one year ago.

Chief Deputy Solferino expressed the desire to expand enrollment in GAGO as well as high school equivalency and substance abuse and domestic violence programs. He wished to see a higher program completion rate and said the 17-day average length of stay allowed limited action; the lower completion rate was due to inmate enrollees being released prior to completion. While inmate release was wholly beneficial, higher completion percentages were desired.

Chief Deputy Solferino stated Chief Deputy Timothy Mosley and Chief Deputy Ralph Caldwell had been challenged with decreasing the presence of fentanyl at the detention facility. He surmised the substance's presence was an effect of cursory searches, body secretion, and individual creative efforts. He said the amnesty box program and clothing distribution during booking had decreased fentanyl presence. The amnesty box program was a successful way to decrease fentanyl access without additional inmate charges.

Chief Deputy Solferino discussed the facility's responsibility to house medically sound inmates and clarified the facility's possession of an infirmary, not a hospital. He commented on the submission of requests for proposals (RFPs) within the past year due to 75 percent of inmates being chronically ill. He explained that unresolvable issues at the infirmary had to be outsourced and the use of outpatient treatment programs necessitated one to two overseeing guards per inmate. This resulted in guard shortages that caused program and tier time stoppages, but increased resources helped alleviate this. He spoke about the facility's medical refusals and recounted a recent meeting that clarified each arresting agency's medical qualifications.

Chief Deputy Solferino highlighted data regarding mental health patients and patients on medication. He reiterated that 75 percent of the facility's population was classified as chronically ill and stated that 50 percent of the population was on mental

health medication at a given time. He mentioned discussions with the Board and County management regarding the development of a new infirmary with mental health capabilities. He said the facility's highly successful Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program was 1 of only 18 nationwide. It provided them with accreditation to supply MAT for certain substance abuse cases. This program was a response to the Board's challenge to integrate successful national programs and was achieved during Sheriff Balaam's first term.

Chief Deputy Solferino said the average length of stay was 17 days and the facility's population was 1,227 inmates as of that morning. This triggered a notice, as the preferred population was under 1,200. The facility's maximum occupancy with one individual per bed was 1,465, but some inmate classifications prohibited more than one inmate per cell. Chief Deputy Solferino complimented Captain Venn's command of analytics and its usefulness in maximizing programming and tier time, which reduced assault. The facility was initiating direct supervision programs, which allowed more than 12 inmates to be out of their cells at once.

Chief Deputy Solferino attributed 44 averted fights to deputy involvement in the facility's common areas. He informed the Board of new data collection on attempted suicides and commended deputy action in this area. Each deputy was instructed to report on and intervene in all self-harm occurrences.

Chief Deputy Solferino noted the Inmate Assistance Program (IAP) was housed within the Detention Services Unit (DSU) and opined the program was necessary nationwide. He praised Sheriff Balaam's first-term initiatives. He revealed a significant increase in gross misdemeanors and felonies from when his career began 24 years prior, remarking that individuals were now only incarcerated for serious causes. Cooperation with the District Attorney's (DA) Office, Public Defender's (PD) Office, and Alternate Public Defender's (APD) Office advanced efforts to keep those in need of serious medical care out of custody. In those cases, cooperation with Chief Justin Roper and the Department of Alternative Sentencing (DAS) was explored.

Chief Deputy Solferino mentioned the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) was housed out of the IAP in the DSU. He highlighted the benefits of having access to nutrition in recidivism reduction.

Chief Deputy Solferino thanked the Board for enabling personnel additions and mentioned the length of deputy training times. He expressed contentment at seeing Commissioners at Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) meetings and thanked them for their efforts. He stated newer deputies were not familiar with the direct supervision model and conveyed excitement regarding Captain Venn's new position since he and his team could more frequently utilize this model.

Chief Deputy Solferino asked the Board for its input on future presentation topics.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Chief Deputy Solferino and Captain Venn for their presence at CAB meetings and thanked Sheriff Balaam for his focus on wraparound programs and behavioral health. She asked how the amnesty box program was communicated to inmates. Chief Deputy Solferino responded that information was communicated via signage and deputies escorting inmates to the facility. Commissioner Garcia suggested development of a categorized program list that could be shared with the Board prior to quarterly updates.

Vice Chair Herman asked if some detention facilities contained hospitals. Chief Deputy Solferino advised correctional health care was unique in that certain treatments were available while the rest had to be outsourced. Captain Venn reported long-term care was not ideal in the facility due to the 17-day average stay. He stated many jails contained triage centers and said their facility partnered with the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) when necessary. Prisons contained hospital facilities with long-term care capabilities, while jails contained triage centers with short-term capabilities.

Commissioner Clark expressed his gratitude and support for the WCSO. He summarized the deputy hiring process and complimented the detention facility's process for minimizing fentanyl presence. He asked if detection dogs were used at the Nevada Cares Campus. Chief Deputy Solferino explained they wished to respect the campus's boundaries by working with Division Director of Housing and Homeless Services Dana Searcy and her staff. The WCSO responded to crimes in progress and investigated serious crimes at the campus. Preventative measures were led by Sergeant Shatawna Daniel and the Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) team, which conducted routine visits to the campus and did not use detector dogs. Commissioner Clark advised he wished to see information regarding law enforcement at the campus in future presentations. He also suggested information be presented that conveyed the costs of utilizing two deputies for Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meetings.

Commissioner Andriola spoke about her positive experiences with Sheriff Balaam and WCSO leadership and commended their perspectives on incarceration. She commented that funding was beneficial when provided as early as possible and requested that funding needs be promptly communicated to the Board.

Chair Hill suggested more information be provided on plans for the Detention Facility's new infirmary. She asked that the Board be given suggestions to help mitigate overpopulation in the detention facility. Chief Deputy Solferino said increased jury trials and court cases added significantly to their workload.

Chair Hill requested information on the forensic jail being built in Southern Nevada. She inquired how it might impact Northern Nevada and its challenges in sharing Lake's Crossing Center (LCC). She commended the holistic perspective employed by the WCSO and Sheriff Balaam and expressed excitement about her upcoming facility tour.

23-0532 **AGENDA ITEM 8** Presentation by Debi Stears, Collection Development Manager for Washoe County Library, regarding Washoe County Library’s Collection Development Policy, including criteria used to select new titles and the process for community members to challenge an item in the current collection.

Washoe County Library (WCL) Collection Development Manager Debi Stears conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Collection Development Mission: Curate a Collection of Library Materials to Reflect the Needs and Interests of Our Community; Forecasting New Titles – 86% of Purchases; Library Catalog as Discovery Tool; Seeking Community Input – 14% of Purchases; Collection Development Policy Highlights; Reconsideration of Library Materials; History of Challenges; Current Censorship Threats.

Ms. Stears thanked the Board and County Manager Eric Brown for the opportunity to present, then introduced WCL Director Jeff Scott. She explained the library system contained 12 physical branches and 1 digital branch. The digital branch contained e-books, downloadable audiobooks, and digital magazines. She expressed excitement at the library’s 2023 budget increase. She explained the library standard of spending 10 percent of budgeting on material acquisition, which was supported by the Nevada State Library and Archives (NSLA). She reported the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) had previously challenged itself to reach the 10 percent mark and she expressed her continued determination to reach that goal. The current year was the closest the LBT had gotten to that standard.

Ms. Stears opined that providing collection development for the community was an honor. She expressed her affinity for data and communicated its use in enriching library efficiency and effectiveness. She said data revealed the community’s desire for new materials. Titles acquired within the last year comprised 6 to 7 percent of the library’s collection but accounted for approximately 40 percent of patron usage. She said new materials were always on display in library branches and community usage reflected findings of national best-seller lists. She disclosed the library’s goal to forecast and provide for patron desires, for which the library relied on industry tools. She encouraged patrons to place holds to ensure the collection supply matched demand.

Ms. Stears said the library’s entire collection was visible online and affirmed that recent system updates enabled better browsing. This browsing was intended to reflect bookstore experiences and connection to popular culture. She differentiated between predicting and dictating patron usage and stated patron feedback was desired. She explained that users could submit material requests online. The library received approximately 600 monthly requests for physical items and thousands of monthly requests at the digital branch. She said the collection development policy was invoked to inform responses to requests. The policy was available on the library’s website. It was also physically available at each library branch and attached to her PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Stears explained material availability was considered when reviewing requests. She stated some items were out-of-print or not yet released. For out-of-print physical materials, an interlibrary loan was sometimes utilized. They also examined opportunities for collection supplementation. She recounted a recent request for a \$95 self-published book and said public libraries did not usually acquire self-published material. They determined the book *Letters to Trump* by former President Donald Trump added value to the library's collection since it fulfilled the criteria in the collection development policy.

Ms. Stears advised of patrons' abilities to request reconsideration for existing collection items. This was a formal policy that ensured each request was uniformly handled. First, the item went to Ms. Stears, who referenced the collection development policy and did associated research. She then submitted notes to Mr. Scott, who contacted the challenger directly. If needed, the challenger could submit an appeal to the LBT, which was the final authority. Ms. Stears revealed her starting date at the library was in 2014, and since then, two reconsideration requests had been submitted. The first request came from a patron concerned with a Scientology video. After discussing Ms. Stears's research, the patron's concerns were resolved. Ms. Stears encouraged patrons to communicate concerns and assert their right to material challenges. She said she had approximately two conversations of this nature per year. The second formal challenge occurred in 2023 regarding *Johnny the Walrus*, a book by Matt Walsh. She explained it was a children's board book and the challenger believed the book contained adult satire. The challenger asked that the book be moved from the children's collection to the adult collection, as they felt the book's antitransgender views could negatively affect transgender children. Ms. Stears's research determined the book's intended audience was children and ascertained that materials were not placed outside of their intended sections.

Ms. Stears addressed book bans and challenges and said two other community threats were hate speech and material displacement. A troubling amount of hate speech was found written in adult books, specifically regarding the African-American experience, the immigrant experience, and Jewish life. Staff members were instructed to report this material, which was then reported to the American Library Association's (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom. She remarked the library was a place for everyone's voice and that hate speech was attempted censorship. Material displacement occurred when patrons desired a book to not be read and primarily occurred with material regarding minorities. Ms. Stears pointed out library staff was instructed to be aware of and report this behavior.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Ms. Stears for recounting the material challenge and acquisition process. She commended the sensitivity with which standards were approached. She mentioned her recent self-initiated familiarity with the ALA and referenced her lifelong regard for reading. She spoke about recent Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meetings in which WCL books with disturbing language were read aloud by public commenters. After discussions with Ms. Stears, she learned some books from the adult collection had been mistaken as belonging to the children's collection. She stated her belief that six books had been challenged in Nevada within the past ten years.

She had previously asked for the number of books appearing on the library's agenda for discussion, to which the answer was none. She voiced her belief that everyone should be able to participate in library processes and asked Ms. Stears to share information about juveniles seeking mature adult content. She mentioned teenage curiosity was normal but questioned how the WCL system handled those situations. Ms. Stears stated their policy was to respect parents' rights to determine appropriate content for their children, which varied by family. She referenced the wide variety of values represented in library materials. She noted that library staff helped patrons in locating chosen value materials but did not guide them in making those decisions.

Commissioner Andriola opined no legislation should regulate parental decision-making, but awareness of potentially inappropriate library material was important. She communicated that reassurance had been achieved in her talks with Ms. Stears regarding appropriate collection choices. Ms. Stears stated the library's duty was to catalog and place books in their intended sections. Commissioner Andriola thanked Ms. Stears for sharing her enthusiasm and knowledge.

Chair Hill referenced her utilization of library services and extended thanks to Ms. Stears for her presentation.

Commissioner Clark stated libraries were temples of knowledge and asked if collaboration existed between the WCL system and Washoe County's detention facility. Ms. Stears advised a small grant had been created three years prior to facilitate library materials at the jail. The partnership continued, with materials provided by library funds. She noted inmates were still Washoe County residents and deserved material access to improve their lives. She revealed community generosity supported material donations to the jail. Commissioner Clark asked if there were other avenues of collaboration to assist with inmate literacy. Ms. Stears said partnerships existed between the jail and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), as well as between the jail and other community organizations. She shared her intention to discuss support opportunities at an upcoming meeting.

Commissioner Clark asked if the library contained *King of the Cats: The Life and Times of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.*, by Wil Haygood. Ms. Stears replied she would be happy to find out and advised Commissioner Clark to submit a request if needed. She commented that the library system was motivated to cultivate community awareness of all its offerings. Commissioner Clark described his affection for Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Ms. Stears's staff confirmed that the library collection contained the book.

Commissioner Andriola questioned the library's progress in reaching its goal of 10 percent budget spending on material acquisition. Ms. Stears reported it was 9 percent and commended Mr. Scott's involvement in the increase from the previous 6 percent. She referenced the cost of e-books and noted the community's hunger for more of those materials. Commissioner Andriola asked if the jump from 9 to the desired 10 percent would be supported by additional funding, to which Ms. Stears responded yes.

Ms. Stears referenced community concern about collections in Washoe County School District (WCSD) libraries. She stated that WCSD and the WCL system were separate entities with separate collections. However, three shared facilities existed: Verdi Community Library & Nature Center, Gerlach Community Library, and Duncan/Traner Community Library. During the school day, these acted as school libraries and were staffed by school librarians. After school hours, these shared facilities provided time for community patronage. She explained that public libraries provided opportunities for parents to explore concerning material themselves, rather than having it enter their children's awareness via gossip.

12:20 p.m. Commissioner Clark left the meeting.

BLOCK VOTE – 9 AND 10

23-0533 **AGENDA ITEM 9** Recommendation to accept a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Assistance Program Subaward from the State of Nevada, Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services in the amount of [\$1,587,817.00; no county match] for Washoe County Child Welfare Services retroactive for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024; authorize the Acting Director of the Human Services Agency to retroactively execute the subgrant award documents; and direct the Comptroller's office to make the necessary budget amendments. Funds will be utilized to implement Emergency Assistance Program services through investigation activities for children and families in crisis. This includes responding to incoming calls, completing investigation reports, providing crisis intervention and making referrals for supportive programs and services. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was heard together.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Penny Brock questioned the number of individuals utilizing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program without proper authorization as United States (US) citizens. She also expressed surprise at the amount of money being given to this program, especially with \$961,000 going to salaries and \$495,000 going to those in need. She expressed concern and posited these amounts should be reversed, with the higher number going to those in need. She felt Commissioner Garcia especially should be concerned with the designated amounts and suggested the Board postpone this agenda item until further research was performed.

Vice Chair Herman requested a staff member provide more information. Human Services Agency (HSA) Acting Director Ryan Gustafson explained the funding was provided annually from the State of Nevada's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and that some funds were allocated to staff salaries. He stated that TANF funding related to work being done with vulnerable populations of children and families.

He noted it helped address approximately 7,000 annual abuse and neglect reports and 2,000 investigations. He asserted TANF funds that went directly to staff increased child safety.

Vice Chair Herman declared the amount of money going to program management was questionable and recommended the topic be more closely examined in the future.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be accepted, authorized, and directed.

23-0534 **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to accept a FY24 Homemaker subgrant award from the State of Nevada, Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) in the amount of [\$364,000.00; \$54,600.00 county match] retroactive from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 to provide Homemaker services to seniors aged 60 or older in Washoe County; retroactively authorize the ADSD approved designee for the Acting Director of the Human Services Agency to execute the grant award documents; and direct the Comptroller's office to make the necessary budget amendments. The purpose of this grant is to support the continuum of care, with the goal of assisting in independent living and preventing premature institutionalization. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 9 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be accepted, authorized, and directed.

12:26 p.m. **The Board recessed.**

1:00 p.m. **The Board reconvened with Assistant District Attorney Nate Edwards absent.**

23-0535 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Possible approval of the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Ryan Gustafson, Division Director of Human Services, as Interim Human Services Director, effective July 18, 2023 pending the appointment of a permanent Human Services Director using the recruitment process for appointed positions approved by the Board on February 28, 2023. If approved, Ryan Gustafson will exercise the authority set forth in Washoe County Code 45.040, which outlines the appointment, salary, and duties of the director. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

1:02 p.m. **Assistant District Attorney Nate Edwards returned to the meeting.**

On the call for public comment, Ms. Janet Butcher reported she was an unpaid, frequent public commenter. She questioned the length of time the Board took to fill positions. She stated continuity should apply to all open positions and wished luck to Human Services Agency (HSA) Division Director Ryan Gustafson.

Commissioner Andriola commended Mr. Gustafson's professionalism and commitment and expressed her support for the appointment.

Commissioner Clark questioned the duration of Mr. Gustafson's potential interim appointment. He stated he wanted the information on the record, despite it being included in the Staff Report.

Assistant County Manager (ACM) Kate Thomas explained the job listing for the HSA Director would be open from August 15 to September 19, 2023, after which a screening committee would review qualified applicants. A first and second round of interviews would then be performed with Board participation, per the recruitment process outlined in the Staff Report. She advised January 2, 2024, was the estimated hire date and Mr. Gustafson would be serving as Interim Director until that time.

Commissioner Clark reiterated that his questions were asked to populate information on the record so that present and future participants could access information associated with Board meetings.

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Division Director of Human Services Ryan Gustafson be appointed as Interim Human Services Director, effective July 18, 2023.

23-0536 **AGENDA ITEM 12** Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 5 - Administration and Personnel to add a new section titled "Registration and Regulation of Lobbyists", establishing a definition for "lobbyist", "communication" and "policymaker", requiring lobbyists to register with the County Manager, requiring the County Manager to maintain and publish a list of registered lobbyists, requiring the County Manager to issue identification credentials to all registered lobbyists, requiring lobbyists to wear such identification credentials at certain times and places, and establishing criminal and civil penalties for any person who knowingly violates the provisions of the section; and set a public hearing for possible adoption of the ordinance for September 12, 2023 Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

Deputy County Clerk Lauren Morris read the title for Bill No. 1898.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Tom Green stated that in 1998 only 34 percent of Americans reported having trust in their government. He said people fought the Revolutionary War over ideology and public turmoil. He asserted the people who attended Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meetings did so out of a sense of patriotism, inclusion, and the desire to enact change. He opined there was a coordinated effort by the political left to silence dissenters by labeling them as lobbyists. In a recent survey, Americans were asked if ordinary people could have an impact when they addressed issues with the government to which 50 percent of people responded yes. He thought that was why every opportunity to hear from constituents was critical. He declared nothing was more important than serving the people. He claimed Washoe County was behind other counties with this item and he was not opposed to lobbyists being required to register. He reported there had been lobbyists at the podium who propagandized for the County. He recalled an individual speaking about the Cares Campus and inviting anyone critical of the homeless cottage industry to take a tour of the facility. He had requested the opportunity to tour the Cares Campus but did not receive a response from his Commissioner. Regarding a previous comment by Chair Hill about meeting attendance, Mr. Green asked where else people were assured that the Board would be forced to sit and listen to them. He claimed people should have a healthy fear of the government, yet it appeared that the Board was in fear of the people, which he did not understand.

Ms. Janet Butcher declared she was not paid to exercise her right to redress the BCC. She wondered what Chair Hill's motivation was for requesting this item. She noted the Reno City Council adopted a similar ordinance. She provided a definition for the term "lobbyist." She reported that from her research, it appeared that most of the cities listed in the Staff Report were under democratic control. She asked if frequent commenters would fall under this requirement.

Ms. Valerie Fiannaca informed she was a business owner with locations in Reno and Sparks. She opined this item was an attempt to intimidate the people. She requested information on the lobbyists for the Board members. She declared she was not paid to attend meetings, she just wanted to see the Country in better shape. She thought people should attend more board and committee meetings to find out what was going on in the community.

Ms. Penny Brock was not present when called to speak.

Ms. Betty Thiessen assured that she was not a lobbyist, she attended meetings because she was concerned about County issues. She expressed consternation regarding this item.

Ms. Katherine Snedigar asserted this item would apply to all persons, but she was not a person. She declared if the Commissioners believed she was a paid lobbyist, they would have to prove it.

Ms. Deborah Sauk wondered how the Board would define a lobbyist. She said she rarely made comments but was present at almost every meeting. She affirmed she was not paid to be present at meetings, she was just a good citizen exercising her rights.

Ms. Pam Darr spoke about an incident at a Sparks City Council meeting where she learned about an application to post community issues. She declared information was power and she attended meetings to empower herself. She thought the Board was denying itself information from the people by moving public comment to the end of the meeting. She suggested the Board explain why that decision was made so the people could better understand it. She asked the Board not to deny itself or the people information by limiting public comments.

Ms. Val White mentioned Chair Hill's recent interview on *Nevada Newsmakers*. She asserted Chair Hill's job was to hear from constituents. She thought the public needed to know about Board members meeting with anyone who was not a government employee or appointee. She wondered what the process was for reporting unregistered lobbyists. She asked if the Board had documented any meetings with lobbyists. She stated that through this item, every business or business representative in the building would need to register as a lobbyist. She did not think this item was a good idea.

Mr. Scott Finley provided documents that were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He spoke about Chair Hill's interview with *Nevada Newsmakers*. He thought this item had several issues. He stated a critical component of the City of Reno's lobbyist ordinance was that the City Clerk would be responsible for handling lobbyist registration. He pointed out that the County's ordinance designated the County Manager to handle the registrations. He opined registration should be handled by the County Clerk because that was an elected position, not an appointed position. Section 1D of the ordinance defined a lobbyist as a person who received anything of value. He reported Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 218H.045(4) indicated that "anything of value" included any expenses for food, beverages, registration fees, travel, or lodging provided, given to, or paid for the benefit of the legislator. He noted an example of the lobbyist registration form was provided but the supplemental registration form was not. He wondered why the additional form was not included in the Staff Report. He asked the Board to revise or reject this item.

Commissioner Andriola wondered how the language for this item compared to other ordinances. She said registering as a lobbyist was a disclosure to policymakers. Registration ensured transparency so people could know that someone was being paid to represent an organization. She asked if this item would apply to people who were not paid to attend meetings. Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich explained this ordinance provided a specific definition for lobbyists which indicated that a person must receive something of value from another person to communicate with a policymaker. She thought this ordinance was comparable to other ordinances in the State. In preparing this ordinance, she reviewed lobbyist ordinances from Clark County, the Cities of Reno, Henderson, and Las Vegas, and NRS Chapter 218H. She noted there were some differences between this ordinance and NRS because Statute required that people lobbying the

Legislature, even in a non-paid status, were required to register. Commissioner Andriola appreciated the clarification. She reiterated her question of whether non-paid citizens had to register as lobbyists to which Ms. Matijevich responded no. Commissioner Andriola wanted to ensure that was clear and on the record.

Commissioner Andriola requested an outline of the registration process. Ms. Matijevich stated the ordinance proposed that anyone who met the definition of a lobbyist must register with the County prior to meeting with a policymaker. Administration of the lobbyists would occur in the Office of the County Manager (OCM) where lobbyists would submit a fillable form, a draft of which was included in the Staff Report. After submitting the form, the information would be placed on a register which the OCM had a duty to maintain and publish on the County's website (www.washoecounty.gov). Lobbyists would only have to register once but could update their status or client list as needed. Upon registration, lobbyists would be issued a badge they would be required to wear when present at the County's Administration Complex and when appearing before a policymaker at any offsite meetings. She noted if Commissioners sat on another board that was not governed by the County's ordinances, lobbyists would not be required to wear badges when present at those meetings. Ongoing reporting of expenditures for lobbyists was not required, which was different from the State's legislative process. She added lobbyists would not be required to disclose each time they contacted a policymaker. Commissioner Andriola asked Ms. Matijevich to define "value." Ms. Matijevich deferred to Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nate Edwards. ADA Edwards responded the term had its ordinary meaning of legal value, so property, money, or other similar things. Commissioner Andriola asked if people wanted to change a particular provision or topic, and that change held value to them, would that fall under this definition of value. ADA Edwards responded no.

Commissioner Clark suggested that instead of registering as lobbyists, people could mark if they were a lobbyist when they signed in for public comment. He declared he was more interested in how lobbyists influenced elected officials. He wondered why the County wanted to regulate lobbyists. He thought campaign contributions should be disclosed. He asked what the repercussions would be if a lobbyist did not register with the County.

Commissioner Garcia asked Ms. Matijevich how County staff came up with the definition of a policymaker in this ordinance. Ms. Matijevich responded that per the Commission's direction, staff modeled this item after the City of Reno's ordinance which included policymakers beyond the Reno City Council. Commissioner Garcia understood the ordinance was modeled after Reno's and the intent was transparency, but she wanted to know if there was any downside to making the ordinance cleaner and defining a policymaker as a County Commissioner. ADA Edwards responded that was up to the Board to decide. Commissioner Garcia suggested an adjustment to Section 1C to have it read that a policymaker was a County Commissioner. Ms. Matijevich thought there might need to be some other technical adjustments throughout the ordinance because there were references to other bodies and boards that would need to be removed.

Commissioner Garcia remarked that in preparation for this item, she called various people from law firms and lobbyists who represented non-profits to get their opinions on the ordinance language. She reported that overall, people were supportive of the ordinance since they already registered with the State and other jurisdictions. She clarified that Washoe County's registration document was just one page, to which Ms. Matijevich responded the document was two pages. Commissioner Garcia stated she did not have the second page in her records which Chair Hill confirmed. Ms. Matijevich displayed the second page, and the full document was placed on file with the Clerk. Commissioner Garcia reported that people thought the additional requirements for addresses and places of business throughout the form were overkill. Ms. Matijevich suggested Commissioner Garcia review page three of the ordinance because each item on the form came from that page. Commissioner Garcia relayed people were concerned that some meetings took place electronically and they felt it was redundant to have to list those addresses. Ms. Matijevich did not think the intent of that section was to capture the location where the lobbying would take place, she thought that provision intended to capture good contact information for the lobbyist. She remarked that if Commissioner Garcia felt the lobbyist's name and place of business were sufficient, then staff could amend the ordinance language and registration form accordingly. Commissioner Garcia responded she preferred a streamlined approach and directed staff to remove those redundancies. ADA Edwards requested clarification on what portion of the ordinance language Commissioner Garcia wanted to remove. Commissioner Garcia asked if there was any language in the ordinance that asked for additional addresses for lobbyists. Ms. Matijevich replied there were fields for the lobbyist's permanent address, place of business, and business address while lobbying, if different from place of business. She said that language stemmed from people lobbying the Legislature because lobbyists often moved to Carson City during the legislative session. She pointed out that the language in the ordinance to provide those addresses was item B1 of Section 5.023.2. Commissioner Garcia said she was okay with leaving the ordinance language as it was provided to the Commission.

Vice Chair Herman opined this ordinance was unnecessary. She found it to be suspicious and unfortunate timing. She declared she would never vote for it.

Commissioner Clark asked who would be responsible for enforcing the ordinance. He wondered what the penalties would be if a lobbyist did not register with the County. He expressed concern that a lobbyist would be stigmatized if they appeared before the Board as a citizen with private concerns. He suggested this item be brought back because the Board and public had not been provided with the second page of the lobbyist registration form prior to the meeting.

Chair Hill stated her understanding of Open Meeting Law (OML) was that as long as the citizens and the Board had access to the document at the same time, either it was published online or they saw it during an open meeting, the Board was still within the confines of the law. ADA Edwards confirmed that was correct. He explained that if the Board had been given the materials and the public had not, it would be a different case. He asserted what mattered for this item was whether it was described accurately in the agenda, which it was.

Commissioner Garcia pointed out that the redundant address field she had referred to was the sixth line on the registration form.

Chair Hill thought Ms. Matijevich understood the Board's directions. She noted this item did not require a vote, it just needed to be read into the record. Since she brought this item to the Board, she was happy to do that.

Bill No. 1898 was introduced by Chair Hill, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

23-0537 **AGENDA ITEM 13** Recommendation to award Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 3217-23 for Sample Ballot Printing and Mailing Services, not including postage or freight for the 2024 Presidential Preference Primary, Primary and General elections to the most responsive and responsible bidder, ProVote Solutions, , in an amount not to exceed [\$640,000.00 total; \$380,000.00 for the FY24 Presidential Preference Primary and Primary Elections and \$260,000.00 for the FY25 General Election], and if approved, authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the contract. Registrar of Voters. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Andriola asked who was involved in and authorized the request for proposal (RFP) process. Registrar of Voters (ROV) Jamie Rodriguez advised standard RFP procedures were followed for Item 13. A proposal indicating County needs was constructed and posted to the standard RFP website. She explained some bidders had reached out after receiving notification of the RFP's publication. Three bids were received for the sample ballot contract. A three-person panel reviewed the contracts, separately scored each contract, and reported back to the Comptroller's Office, which awarded the bid based on the provided scoring.

Commissioner Andriola asked if other jurisdictions utilized ProVote Solutions. Ms. Rodriguez responded that some jurisdictions used ProVote Solutions for ballots because the company provided both ballot and sample ballot printing services. However, she did not know if any counties utilized them for sample ballot printing specifically. She reported the State of Nevada was developing its own RFP, which counties could opt into, and that ProVote Solutions was expected to respond to that bid. Commissioner Andriola asked Ms. Rodriguez to clarify what she meant when referring to counties' ability to opt into the State's RFP. Ms. Rodriguez explained the recent passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 192 allowed the State to create its own bid. However, the opt-in deadline for the 2024 election cycle was August 1, 2023, which the County had missed. Ms. Rodriguez explained the issue had not been brought before the Board prior to that date due to a lack of information and a delay in RFP posting.

Commissioner Andriola questioned if any local bidders responded to the RFP for Item 13. Ms. Rodriguez said the closest responder was from Las Vegas; there were none from Northern Nevada. Commissioner Andriola stated the local printing industry was becoming increasingly less capable of accomplishing large projects, leaving the work to be

outsourced to California. She expressed discontent with the lack of local opportunities for printing. She opined that local printing was not necessarily appropriate for Item 13 but expressed a desire to see local preference in the future, when possible. She referenced her similar experiences at the Nevada Legislature and reiterated her desire to give local business preference in the future. She mentioned the printing industry had changed and said the State's printing capacity had decreased over time.

Commissioner Clark expressed his desire to keep projects local and said keeping money local to the community was worth potential added costs. He said the County had the ability to print Value Notices for the Assessor's Office within the last six years. He expressed concern for printing security, including employees, security procedures, quantity control, chain of command, and voter rolls.

Ms. Rodriguez informed sample ballots would be printed, so any extras could not be utilized. She pointed out that bid responses included security measures and handling procedures.

Commissioner Clark asserted similar concerns would surface regarding ballot printing. He mentioned his knowledge of a printing press in Carson City and asked if the State of Nevada could be utilized for printing.

Ms. Rodriguez responded she could not speak on behalf of the State but shared that the State no longer printed sample ballots for rural Nevada counties; therefore, the State would not be likely to print them for Washoe County. She added that the State did not bid on the RFP.

Commissioner Clark said he would seek a local printer and suggested the possibility of outdated lists. He asked how often RFP recipient lists were updated. Ms. Rodriguez advised lists were updated by the Comptroller's Office, which also handled RFPs. She stated an updated list was submitted to the Comptroller for the RFP in question earlier in the year, which included known local printers. Comptroller Cathy Hill affirmed that RFPs were posted online and in Building D of the Washoe County Administration Complex. She said RFPs could also be sent to interested parties or recommended.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Briana Foroszowsky asked the Board not to approve Item 13. She requested the RFP return to the advertisement phase and that local printers be solicited. She asked if out-of-state bidders were solicited directly or had responded to the advertisement. She also questioned if Washoe County printers were solicited and asked that the names of any local printers that were directly solicited be disclosed. She called three local printers the previous day and said none of them were aware of Washoe County's ballot projects. One had been in business for almost 30 years and one for over 34 years. She reported that each company expressed interest in the RFP. One business owner declared there was a lack of consideration for local business and expressed skepticism at his chance of being awarded the contract. The three business owners expressed support for a contract awarded locally. Ms. Foroszowsky posited that local

oversight of elections was essential and a locally awarded contract would increase citizen confidence in elections.

Ms. Tracey Hilton-Thomas implored the Board to examine its efforts in awarding the RFP locally, instead of generically advertising it. She opined that local companies should be given priority and apologized to Commissioner Clark for not greeting him at a prior time. She complimented his passionate approach to his duties and asked him to exhibit the same passion regarding Item 13. She mentioned RR Donnelley, a printer in Stead, that printed local newspaper inserts. She asserted the company's potential to complete the project and questioned if any effort was made to involve them or other local printers.

Ms. Angie Fischer stated she worked at International Minute Press, a local print shop. She remarked that the amount of money leaving the County would be substantial if a nonlocal printer was used. She said she found one advertisement for the RFP in her research, a legal ad in the *Reno Gazette-Journal (RGJ)*. She was not familiar with the RFP process but did not want to see money leave the community. She asserted that local leadership should reach out to local printers and requested Item 13 be delayed until local printers could examine it.

Ms. Betty Thiessen remarked she only represented herself and asked that Item 13 be postponed until local printers were informed of the RFP.

Ms. Janet Butcher declared she was not paid to be present at the meeting. She believed money should be kept in the community. She referenced previous experiences with bills being sent out of the community. She speculated potential decreases in local printing capabilities were due to the outsourcing of projects. When sending software RFPs, she said she was proactive in contacting potential qualified applicants. She explained that local business owners might be too busy to research or respond to RFPs. In her research, she found ProVote Solutions in the Better Business Bureau (BBB), but with no rating. She stated she found mixed comments regarding the company's quality of work and noted that positive comments could have been solicited.

Ms. Valerie Fiannaca said she utilized DigiPrint Corporation, which performed high-volume printing and mailing services. She asserted the presence of local printers with high-volume capabilities. She mentioned the Nevada Republican Party's ongoing lawsuit to keep the Republican Party out of the presidential primary and allow solely for a caucus instead. She posited it might be prudent to wait until the ongoing lawsuit was settled before printing occurred for Items 13 and 14 because the lawsuit's results might necessitate that different information be printed.

Ms. Val White mentioned the relationship between elections and the County's vendor contracts for election material. She explained the mail-in ballot contract was a primary part of elections and utilized an electronic voting system (EVS). She asserted that Washoe County's election processes pertained to her right to be provided honest, transparent, and accurately determined results, which was also indicated in the Nevada

Voters' Bill of Rights. She claimed electronic voting systems had been proven as untrustworthy and hackable, and criticized using taxpayer funds for ballots counted by EVS. She mentioned problems with unofficial ballots entering the processing stream via the United States Postal Service (USPS) in the past. She noted a previous printing vendor had delivered more ballots than ordered and warned it could happen again. She referenced a document she submitted that was also posted on Nevadasignal.com, declaring it had links to credible evidence that EVS was a subpar system. She also referenced a link to a 20-minute video on the site that featured Democrats questioning EVS's trustworthiness. She opined any votes to approve Item 13 supported elections that lacked integrity. She informed the Board of two Twitter links on Nevadasignal.com that explained the system's weaknesses. She said voting on this agenda item prior to a resolution in the Nevada Republican Party's ongoing lawsuit would be unwise.

Mr. Roger Edwards thanked Commissioner Garcia for her response to a situation involving a flag. He said he was a 37-year veteran, as well as an 18-year veteran general contractor, where he responded to many County RFPs and did remodeling work. He posited that an RFP could be challenging and that they were usually created by someone without project knowledge. He advised that a lack of local response indicated an issue with the RFP. He admitted some printers were not capable of printing 400,000 ballots and stated an RFP could be segmented into two or three parts to appeal to local printers. He opined various methods could be employed to support local work.

Commissioner Andriola spoke about her familiarity with the printing industry and clarified that some large printers, including RR Donnelley, did not have the necessary machinery to print the items mentioned in Agenda Items 13 and 14. She expressed a desire for local contracts and mentioned her experience working with the Nevada Legislature to implement a 5 percent preference for local companies. She asked if the Board was allowed to mandate the same preference. She also questioned if the RFP could be sent back out for bidding with expedited processing.

Ms. Rodriguez explained the statutory minimum for posting the RFP was two weeks, followed by a review period. She agreed with Commissioner Andriola's preference of utilizing a local company and announced an in-state company, Taylor Printing, had been invited to bid. She cautioned against postponing the contract and noted a paper shortage had caused concern regarding vendor supplies. Postponing the contract could result in fewer bidders because printing companies ordered supplies annually, so they might not have enough left. Asking printers to bid later in the year could lead to hesitation since they might not be able to acquire all the necessary materials. Regarding the Nevada Republican Party's ongoing lawsuit, she explained that if a primary did not occur, the associated ballots would not be printed or mailed. Therefore, the County would not incur those costs.

Commissioner Andriola questioned the repercussions of postponing Item 13 until the next Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting. She shared knowledge of two local printers she had in mind. She said she was not sure of their printing capabilities but knew they had performed similar projects in the past. She acknowledged the paper

shortage and inquired about the amount of total added time if this item was postponed for one week. Ms. Rodriguez advised a minimum of six weeks would be added to the timeline, even for expedited processing. This included time for RFP posting, bid review, contract awarding, and three weeks for agenda creation and approval.

Commissioner Andriola offered to provide information about local printers offline, for which she had no interest or stake, and asked if they could be contacted. She questioned if, in the event no local printers accepted the project, this agenda item could be revisited in its current form, thereby saving time later.

Ms. Rodriguez clarified the three-week agenda approval process included various departmental approvals, not just agenda item creation. This process ensured the Open Meeting Law (OML) was adhered to and proper Granicus procedures were followed. She stated she would be happy to explore using local vendors in the future, although local vendors were not guaranteed to score the highest in the RFP process. Being local did not mean they would be awarded the contract.

Commissioner Andriola assented and noted she had been a purchasing agent for years. She indicated that although both local printers she had in mind provided similar printing services in the past, it did not mean they were presently capable. She asserted that everyone involved in the process had performed to the best of their capabilities, but busy schedules might have interfered with making proactive local contact with printers.

Ms. Rodriguez said she was not sure which companies received communication about the RFP because that was not in her department's purview. She advised accepting the current contract, which could be terminated at any point, so that progress on election preparations could be made. She said some initial deadlines for vendors occurred the following month to allow for time to acquire materials. Waiting one month would coincide with vendor material preparations.

Commissioner Andriola asked County Manager Eric Brown if it was possible to expedite agenda item processing so local vendors could be contacted. She questioned if expedition was possible for an identical agenda item to reduce repetitive procedures. Manager Brown assured Commissioner Andriola of the Board's interest in local vendors and noted the matter had been explored after both the 2020 and 2022 elections. He explained that local printers had repeatedly been found to lack either equipment or capabilities. Manager Brown recommended the Board take prompt action in selecting a capable vendor. He said proactive outreach and capability confirmation with local vendors for future use was possible in the meantime, but the current timing did not allow for postponing Item 13. As a former cable operator, Manager Brown mentioned he used to send 5,000,000 mailings monthly and that the print industry had changed in many states. He cautioned that orientation to a new vendor could result in disappointment, as evidenced by the County's experience in 2022. To minimize risk, printing capabilities had been prioritized over locale.

Commissioner Andriola concurred that the printing industry had changed but said she desired clarification from Ms. Hill. She questioned if Item 13 could be delayed one week and asked if the two companies she knew could be contacted during that time, as she knew they had performed similar projects in the past. She asked if the potential six-week timeframe and scoring process could be expedited to save time.

Ms. Hill said the process could be restarted but that no current bidders could be disregarded. They would need to work with the District Attorney's (DA) Office to ensure pricing was released correctly and sensitive information was properly handled. The County would also need to ensure the RFP was posted for two weeks and then properly evaluated.

Commissioner Andriola clarified her intent was merely to communicate with local vendors within a week, not restart the whole RFP process. She wished to establish the capabilities of local bidders, and then revisit this agenda item as-is if they were not capable. If they affirmed their capabilities, then she wished to expedite the entire process. She asked Ms. Hill to confirm there had not been a push for local responses to the RFP other than the required postings. Ms. Hill said they did not receive any push notifications.

Commissioner Andriola asked Ms. Hill to clarify the procedure for adding a 5 percent preference for local vendors during the RFP process. Ms. Hill stated that would necessitate restarting the RFP rating process and reiterated the six-week timeframe.

Chair Hill asked Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nate Edwards and Ms. Hill if the Board was required to vote on Item 13 that day and questioned the repercussions if a vote did not occur. She acknowledged the Board's obligation to facilitate an election. She wanted to ensure printers with proper capabilities were acquired and said the County's RFP process could be modified separately moving forward.

Ms. Hill affirmed her willingness to reach out to local vendors per Commissioner Andriola's request. She stated if local vendors confirmed their inability to perform the project, Commissioner Andriola's request would be satisfied. If local vendors voiced their capability of performing the project, the RFP would be shut down. Then, the DA would be consulted regarding legalities in reposting and rating with local preference. She confirmed her willingness to abide by this process.

Ms. Rodriguez cautioned that vendors might not be capable of committing to a contract that could not be awarded until early October. It might not allow them enough time to mail sample ballots in December. She advised that would be the timeline if local bidders confirmed their capabilities. She did not know if vendors could complete the contract without obtaining knowledge of necessary supplies until October.

Chair Hill posited support for local companies was a necessary discussion but the current agenda item was not the appropriate setting.

Commissioner Clark opined that in his short time as Commissioner, there had been a surplus of critical deadlines presented to the Board. He clarified this did not apply solely to the ROV's Office. He declared it did not allow adequate time for Board deliberation and said he felt rushed. He asked for the project's drop-dead date. He urged department heads to bring items forward a month or two in advance to allow for proper deliberation time and information collection. He announced he was not going to support Item 13 because he desired more time.

Ms. Rodriguez said she did not know the drop-dead date because it was determined by the vendor. She offered the timeline for providing the page count to the vendor as the second week of September. Commissioner Clark mentioned he received word that the project completion date was the end of October. Chair Hill posited the date was determined by many factors.

Vice Chair Herman shared her agreement with Commissioner Andriola's comments and opined that community teamwork would enable project completion.

Commissioner Garcia asserted her support of the current item and made a motion to approve.

ADA Edwards advised of Statute requirements to award a contract to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, except as provided by Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 332.075. He explained the Board had three options. The first was to accept the contract based on an award to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, the second was to reject the contract because there was no lowest responsive and responsible bidder, and the third was to reject the contract because public interest required it. If executing the third choice, a new bidding process would be reopened.

Commissioner Andriola sought clarification that the project's drop-dead date was the second week of September. Ms. Rodriguez explained the timeline for providing the page count to vendors was the second week of September. This would ensure they had the proper materials for sample ballots.

Commissioner Andriola confirmed with ADA Edwards that tabling Item 13 was not possible. ADA Edwards explained that a contract was awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, except as provided by Statute. He said NRS 332.075 was the exception Statute that dictated allowable rejection situations. He advised those situations were either lack of a lowest responsive and responsible bidder or public interest. He said no statements had been made regarding a lack of a lowest responsive and responsible bidder, so two of the three options would not apply. Only the issue of public interest would apply. He noted the RFP process would begin again if the contract was rejected.

Commissioner Andriola asked ADA Edwards to define "public interest." ADA Edwards said it would be some important interest that served the public good that would be thwarted if the BCC did not honor it by proceeding that day.

Commissioner Garcia assessed that staff understood the debate was not between local or nonlocal and said the RFP process was followed. The RFP was listed on April 25, evaluated by a panel on May 23, scored, and the lowest responsive and responsible bidder was identified. She referenced her standing motion to approve Item 13.

Chair Hill posited public interest would not be served if Item 13 was rejected.

Commissioner Clark reiterated feeling forced into a decision due to lack of time for deliberation and said he would not vote to approve Item 13.

Commissioner Garcia moved, seconded by Chair Hill, to award the contract. The motion failed on a vote of 2-3 with Vice Chair Herman and Commissioners Clark and Andriola voting no.

On motion by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 3-2 vote with Chair Hill and Commissioner Garcia voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 not be awarded or authorized.

23-0538 **AGENDA ITEM 14** Recommendation to Award Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 3216-23 for Mail-In Ballot On-Demand Printing and Mailing Services, not including freight or postage for the 2024 Presidential Preference Primary, Primary and General elections to the most responsive and responsible bidder, Runbeck Election Services, in an amount not to exceed [\$815,000.00 total]; [\$515,000.00] for the FY24 Presidential Preference Primary and Primary Elections and [\$300,000.00] for the FY25 General Election, and if approved, authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the contract. Registrar of Voters. (All Commission Districts.)

On the call for public comment, Ms. Valerie Fiannaca announced she was interested in moving to Arizona, so she was closely following its elections. She opined everyone should have familiarity with Runbeck Election Services because of its association with ballot scandals. She was concerned about potential cooperation between Washoe County and Runbeck. She posited that Runbeck's conflicts involved chain of custody and ballot insertion.

Ms. Janet Butcher discussed her interest in Runbeck's association with Arizona. She clarified she had seen negative comments about Runbeck, not a company from California. She asked if the County had used Runbeck in the past. She referenced County Manager Eric Brown's previous caution against using new companies.

Ms. Angie Fischer mentioned her awareness of the four respondents to the request for proposal (RFP) and stated their locations. She posited that although each of the companies' communities would enjoy the \$815,000 contract, increased efforts should be made for local contracts, even if that meant assisting with supply or equipment upgrades.

She said the County should give opportunities to locals since locals had a vested interest in the community.

Ms. Betty Thiessen thanked Commissioner Andriola for her vote to reject Item 13. She noted her comments were the same for Items 13 and 14. She expressed her support of local companies and said the last election ballots printed in Washington contained several mistakes. She opined local printing should be used for all elections and ballots.

Ms. Val White provided a document that was distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She referenced the documents she submitted and said they included several links cautioning against electronic voting system (EVS) and mail-in ballot use. She asserted the material's ability to make people question the integrity of election results. She explained the linked video was 20 minutes long and featured Democrats, including former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, expressing hesitation at the use of computer-tabulated election results. She opined using EVS was morally questionable. She expressed dissatisfaction with the District Attorney's (DA) response to Mr. Robert Beadles's lawsuit. She commented that mail-in ballots were part of those lawsuits and that evidence. She alleged none of the lawsuits would have been filed if the Board had reviewed the testimony from a nationally recognized expert who analyzed the election results from Washoe County and the State of Nevada. She opined this would determine the County did not have elections but instead had "selections." She thought reviewing the mail-in ballots would have exposed the failure of the elections department and the Registrar of Voters (ROV), and the County Manager's incompetence and possible crimes. Chair Hill asked Ms. White to direct her comments to the Board. Ms. White mentioned her right to free speech and continued her comments about Manager Brown. Chair Hill informed Ms. White she did not have the right to attack staff directly and asked Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nate Edwards for guidance.

ADA Edwards explained the Chair could disallow personal attacks. He referenced the parameters listed in the agenda's "Public Comment" section and said the Chair could use her judgment as to how the parameters were implemented. Chair Hill asked Ms. White to refrain from personal attacks and restarted the timer.

Ms. White posited that Runbeck Election Services would soon prove itself to be incompetent and she questioned Nevada's motivations regarding elections. She stated she did not agree with the limitations on her speech.

Mr. Scott Finley submitted documents that were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He mentioned his comptroller and military background in the United States Air Force (USAF). He posited the Board must reject Item 14 because staff failed to include Attachment B and Addendum A. He explained the provided documents were from the Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting on March 8, 2022. At that time, Ms. Deanna Spikula was still Washoe County's ROV. Mr. Finley said the two documents authenticated the bid submission. He opined that the inclusion of the two documents for Item 14 might clarify why K&H Election Services did not receive the

contract. He referenced a conversation between former Commissioner Vaughn Hartung and Ms. Spikula, in which Ms. Spikula told Commissioner Hartung that K&H Election Services was a trusted vendor. Mr. Finley questioned why K&H Election Services was not awarded the contract.

Commissioner Clark noted his observations of similarities between Items 13 and 14. He posited that a local company should be pursued and said preference should go to companies in the County and then the State. Vice Chair Herman agreed with Commissioner Clark.

Commissioner Andriola asked if any of the bid responders were local. ROV Jamie Rodriguez said Taylor Print Impressions was from Las Vegas, so it was the closest to being local. She explained it was the only certified ballot vendor in Nevada. Commissioner Andriola inquired into Taylor Print Impressions' ranking. Ms. Rodriguez advised she was only informed of the winner and was not provided with a scoring breakdown of the other bidders.

Commissioner Andriola confirmed with ADA Edwards that the same voting framework applied to Items 13 and 14. She clarified there was no provision which allowed for consideration of Taylor Print Impressions for the contract since it was not the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. ADA Edwards confirmed that was correct.

Commissioner Andriola asked if she could be provided with the pricing difference between Runbeck Election Services and Taylor Print Impressions. Commissioner Andriola specified that rejecting Item 14 would restart the whole RFP process, which was confirmed by Comptroller Cathy Hill. Ms. Hill said pricing information was kept on file at the Assessor's Office.

Commissioner Andriola expressed uncertainty because she felt local vendors should be given preferential treatment. She mentioned the County missed the deadline to join the State of Nevada's bid and requested to know who the chosen company was once selected. Ms. Rodriguez advised they could find out the results but could not join the bid since the timeline had passed. Commissioner Andriola asked if action could be taken to help the ROV keep the deadline in the future.

Ms. Rodriguez discussed the RFP scores and reported that Runbeck Election Services scored 750 and Taylor Print Impressions scored 460. Commissioner Andriola inquired into the companies' price differences. Commissioner Clark stated he did not want to know the price difference. Ms. Rodriguez said costs varied by election and depended on many factors, including ballot size, reprints for closed primaries, and volume variability.

Commissioner Andriola said although she was still hesitant, she was encouraged by the presence of a Nevada bidder. She asked if local vendors had received proactive communication for this item. Ms. Rodriguez said Taylor Print Impressions was informed and it was the only ballot-certified company in Nevada.

Commissioner Andriola announced her support of Item 14, owing to the knowledge that Taylor Print Impressions had bid on it.

Commissioner Garcia clarified with Commissioner Andriola that she was against Item 13 but supported Item 14.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Chair Hill, which motion duly carried on a 3-2 vote with Vice Chair Herman and Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 14 be awarded and authorized.

23-0539 **AGENDA ITEM 15** Discussion and possible action to create an election citizen advisory board, in accordance with NRS 244.1945 and WCC 5.437, for the purpose of engaging citizens in discussions relating to the elections process and enabling the election citizen advisory board to provide recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding improvements to processes and procedures that are within the purview of Washoe County that may further ensure a fair and transparent election. Possible action on this item may include adoption of a resolution, with or without changes, drafted by the Commissioner Support team creating the Citizen Election Forum. [Total fiscal impact \$6,200] Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

This item was pulled.

23-0540 **AGENDA ITEM 16** Public Comment.

Ms. Bri Schmidt stated she was a former teacher who now served as a Program Associate with Silver State Equality, a Statewide LGBTQIA+ civil rights organization. She spoke in support of libraries and the programs they provided. She acknowledged that the Commission did not have control over the programming in the library system. She hoped the Board would appoint members to the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) who represented the entire community. She mentioned that drag queen story hour (DQSH) had become a controversial topic in the community. She thought everyone deserved to feel heard and respected regardless of race, religion, or sexual orientation. She said libraries provided a safe place for youth who may not feel secure in their homes or schools. She opined libraries would no longer be places of respect and safety if people allowed censorship to overtake them. She hoped the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) would empower the libraries through funding and support so library staff could continue to do good work for the community.

Ms. Jessica Munger remarked that she and her family loved public libraries. She spoke in support of DQSH and against censorship. She alleged the censorship of free speech and expression in public libraries was a slippery slope into fascism. She opined drag was a form of art categorized by the exaggerated performance of gender expression that subverted expectations. She noted people had seen forms of drag from *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Victor Victoria*, and other media classics. As a parent, she knew it was her job to decide

the art and performances her child was allowed to see. She declared if parents did not like DQSH, they did not have to attend. She thought people who did not have children should not have a say in what children had access to at the library. She asserted that LGBTQIA+ families would not go away and would continue to make art accessible to everyone.

Ms. Hailey Lindsley commented in support of the continuation and expansion of DQSH for kids in Washoe County. She believed it was crucial to prioritize the well-being, education, and diversity of children. She asserted the DQSH program valued literacy, acceptance, and open-mindedness among children. She thought exposing young minds to a variety of perspectives and experiences encouraged empathy, tolerance, and a sense of unity which she believed was imperative when preparing children for the future. She claimed the opposition to DQSH came from a vocal minority which should not overshadow the positive impact DQSH had on the community. In a democracy, it was vital that decisions were not swayed solely by the loudest voices, but were guided by a commitment to equality, education, and the well-being of all citizens. She urged the Board to consider the long-term benefits of DQSH for the children of Washoe County. She postulated that DQSH could help shape a generation that was compassionate, respectful, and understanding of the world around them. She asked the Board to support DQSH and stand strong in its commitment to a brighter, more inclusive future for Washoe County.

Ms. Daniella Reynolds told a personal story about a professional decision she made not to let her team attend a conference. She stated the choice she made negatively impacted the professional development of her coworkers and she regretted taking away their ability to choose. She remarked it was not her place to take the choice away from her team, much like it was not the responsibility of the Commission to determine what programs parents allowed their children to be part of. She asked the Board to appoint LBT members who valued inclusivity in the library system.

Mr. Stephen Landon stated he was a naval intelligence veteran who had visited over 30 countries. He was a proud supporter of DQSH. He considered it a selfless act to share one's time with children. He did not understand why people wanted to remove programs they did not agree with from the library. He wanted youth to understand inclusion, have their own opinions, and be free to express themselves through education and experience. He objected to tactics designed to suppress children's experiences. He thought kids would always hunger for knowledge. He claimed reading was about sharing time with each other. He asserted he did not invest his energy into America to see opportunities taken away from children.

Ms. Sharon Reed spoke about moving to a small town in Indiana in 1994 and the opening of that town's public library. Her children were the first in line for the library's opening and got the first two library cards. She remarked her only rules for her kids in the library were to keep their voices down and not to check out more books than they could carry. She declared she never put restrictions on what her daughters were allowed to read because the books they read allowed her to know what they were questioning or interested in. She did not think all children had parents who could sit with them and explain how something worked. She thought libraries provided the opportunity

to seek answers to questions. She asserted that opportunity should never be taken away from children because it allowed them to understand the world around them. She reported the library in Indiana she spoke about was looking to remove 11,000 books because people did not like the contents. She claimed libraries should not be removing books, they should be adding more.

Mr. Chris Daniels declared he had read to children as Ginger Divine during DQSH for five years. He felt there was a lot of discussion in the community surrounding him and other drag queens. In the five years he had been a reader, the DQSH program had grown exponentially. He reported the program was at three libraries and hosted five story hours, many of which were at capacity and had children in overflow areas being read the story by volunteers. He opined the library staff were phenomenal and the amount of work they did to reach every member of the community was commendable. He asserted that LGBTQIA+ people were also members of the community; therefore, services directed toward them were just as meaningful and important as other programs. He expressed concern regarding the stigmatization of DQSH because he thought it would incite violence in the community. He noted many people expressed gratitude to him that DQSH existed. He spoke about a recent story time where the children discussed what they would name their ponies if their parents allowed them to have one. He mentioned transgender youths who attended DQSH and reported to him that the event was one of the first times they felt okay. He thought it was a tragedy that there were citizens who did not feel safe in the community. He asked the Board to support DQSH.

Mr. Scott Finley provided documents that were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He mentioned the Battle of Granicus from Alexander the Great's invasion of the Persian Empire. He stated that during a presentation on SpeakUp, Assistant to the County Manager Erick Willrich was asked how someone could verify whether SpeakUp profiles were real to which Mr. Willrich responded the program operated on the honor system. Mr. Finley explained the system was controlled by a cloud-based software company called Granicus. He reported Granicus was the leading provider of cloud-based civic engagement technology and services. The software supported the missions of over 6,000 government customers globally with roughly 110,000 people signing up daily to receive information through Granicus. He thought if there was no way to verify if an electronic comment (EComment) on SpeakUp was from a real person, then people should assume that the comment was made by artificial intelligence (AI). He said other cities that used the platform allowed users to create a profile using Facebook, Google, Microsoft, or Twitter, but the only social media Washoe County allowed was Facebook. He claimed the only way to verify if a constituent was real would be if they showed up to a Board meeting in person. He requested that the BCC ban the use of SpeakUp and similar software platforms. He alleged public comment was removed from the beginning of the meeting to force constituents to register with SpeakUp, thus surrendering their private information to tech giants.

Mr. Bill Sims expressed support for DQSH. He thought the children of Washoe County deserved to have books read to them by performers at the library. He understood not all parents approved of DQSH, but those parents did not have to bring their

children to the event. He asserted those in opposition to the event should not attempt to remove that opportunity from children who benefited from the program. As someone who was disabled, he thought DQSH events helped promote inclusivity and diversity by providing a safe space for children to learn about gender expression and identity. He claimed DQSH fostered an environment where all children felt accepted and valued for who they were. He urged the Board to protect DQSH.

Mr. Juan Valdez believed the County should support DQSH because it fostered acceptance and a love of reading. Just as drag performers transformed into vibrant characters, DQSH events merged art and literature, captivating young minds with the magic of storytelling. He thought drag queens and kings not only helped bring stories to life but created a safe space where diversity was embraced and encouraged children to welcome their own uniqueness. He claimed those events showed that reading was a gateway to empathy which allowed people to step into the shoes of characters from all walks of life. He asked the Board to support DQSH and the love of reading it nurtured in children.

Ms. Beth Blackard spoke in support of DQSH. She expressed concern that a vocal minority might shut down a program that could benefit many families. She reported only 46 percent of Washoe County elementary school students tested at or above the proficient reading level for their grade. For high school students, that number was only 51 percent meaning half the children in the County struggled with reading. She declared children who had trouble reading became adults who struggled with reading. She claimed children needed stories that engaged with them on a personal level, and she thought DQSH met that need for children. She asserted the program was not deviant or dangerous, it was someone in a fancy dress and wig reading stories to children. She remarked that at one of the events over the summer, which was attended by more than 100 people, Ginger Divine read a story about a unicorn named Kevin who had a rough day. She stated people did not have to attend DQSH if they did not agree with it.

Ms. Katherine Snedigar recalled her comments from the previous BCC meeting. After she was removed from the meeting, Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nate Edwards stated she disrupted and interfered with the process to which Chair Hill agreed. Ms. Snedigar asserted she did not agree with ADA Edwards' assessment of the situation. She declared the Board could not disrupt her free speech.

Ms. Janet Butcher informed she was not paid to be present at BCC meetings. She expressed consternation regarding the removal of early public comment from the agenda. She remarked many members of the community had to install security systems around their homes due to rising crime in their neighborhoods. She stated she could not find evidence in the Constitution that disallowed people from organizing and pointed out there was an organized group from the LGBTQIA+ community present at the meeting. She claimed a group was paid to attend a BCC meeting the previous year to speak against Vice Chair Herman's election integrity resolution. She spoke about Chair Hill's recent interview with *Nevada Newsmakers* and expressed discontent about Chair Hill's response to why people were speaking in opposition to County Manager Eric Brown.

Ms. Valerie Fiannaca thanked Ms. Debi Stears for her presentation. She reported that the book *Lawn Boy*, which Ms. Stears reported was in the adult section of the library, was in the young adult section. She spoke about Chair Hill's interview with *Nevada Newsmakers* and expressed frustration about some of the comments that were made. She reported that the group of people who regularly attended BCC meetings did not know each other before they started attending. She thought people should attend more meetings for the boards and committees that controlled money, health, and social situations in the community. She claimed voting machines were not verifiable and paper ballots or military control of elections were the best options. She asked why the Board was not interested in cleaning up the voter rolls. She mentioned a lawsuit between Mr. Robert Beadles and the County and postulated that Mr. Beadles's allegations were correct. She stated she was not opposed to DQSH and that parents should have the ultimate choice in the programs their children were exposed to. She was opposed to DQSH taking place at taxpayer-funded locations. She suggested the program be moved to private locations.

Ms. Barbara Stirling declared the Reno and Sparks populations were increasing despite there being a housing shortage in the area. She stated Dandini Spectrum Holdings, LLC managed by Mr. Mark Campbell had proposed a 420-unit apartment complex on the northeast corner of Highway 395 and Dandini Spectrum Boulevard. She reported the property was currently classified as unusable land that paid minimal property taxes. Upon completion of the housing project, the property would pay over \$1 million in property taxes in the first year. She asserted the project would create over 300 jobs for varying lengths of time. She mentioned Mr. Campbell planned to set aside 24 units for senior citizens and would offer them a three-year lease with a 4.5 percent cap on the annual rent increase. She asked the Board to consider moving forward with the project.

Ms. Marsy Kupfersmith said she was a senior advocate who sat on several senior boards. She expressed support for the Dandini Spectrum housing project. She declared there was a housing crisis in the senior community as they could not afford rent increases due to living off fixed incomes. She asked the Board to consider the project and do whatever it took to move it forward. She pointed out the project would address workforce and affordable senior housing which were two communities the Board had recognized a housing need for.

Ms. Donna Clontz provided a document that was distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She stated she was involved in a lot of senior programs throughout the community. She noted the document was a brochure that was designed to provide seniors with contact information for various community resources. She informed that eight senior resource fairs had been hosted at local libraries. She reported she was participating in the senior games and the Washoe County team had won for the past six years. She spoke in support of the Dandini Spectrum housing project and declared the community needed an affordable housing project that would allow senior citizens to stay in their homes. She asked the Board to consider the project.

Mr. Steve Kupfersmith spoke in support of the Dandini Spectrum housing project. He opined the project would create jobs, bring tax dollars, and benefit the senior population. He declared Mr. Campbell was willing to work with seniors. He challenged the Commission to do what was right for the constituents rather than what was politically expedient. He thought the seniors of the County deserved more than they had gotten so far.

Ms. Tracey Hilton-Thomas expressed appreciation that Item 13 was rejected, and frustration that Item 14 was approved. She claimed that the Washoe County Stadium Authority (WCSA) was not in compliance with Washoe County Code (WCC) 5.52 which stipulated that the board must meet at least twice a year. She pointed out Washoe County's website did not show any meetings for that board since 2019 and she wondered if it had been dissolved. She spoke about Chair Hill's interview with *Nevada Newsmakers* and appreciated Chair Hill's discussions regarding transportation, subsidized housing, and daycare facilities. She expressed dissatisfaction regarding other topics discussed during the interview. She declared the people who gathered to speak during BCC meetings were not organized and did not know each other prior to their attendance at Board meetings. She asked that EComments be modified to not require portable document format (PDF) files to be downloaded.

Mr. Oliver Bream said he supported DQSH. He opined the program promoted diversity, acceptance, and open-mindedness in the community. He thought children were naturally curious and DQSH provided them with a unique opportunity to engage with individuals who expressed themselves differently. He believed that type of exposure helped break down stereotypes from an early age and fostered an environment where people could be celebrated for who they were. He stated the program emphasized self-expression and creativity by showcasing drag queens as vibrant, imaginative role models. He claimed DQSH contributed to a society that was more inclusive, compassionate, and understanding.

Ms. Victoria Blanford informed she was the database manager for the Reno Little Theater and an active volunteer in the community. She declared DQSH was a voluntary event that people did not have to attend if they did not want to. She asserted freedom of choice represented something more fundamental than power; it represented a person's right to be an individual without arbitrary authority. She claimed the only hostile aspect of DQSH events was the protesters. She said she volunteered for DQSH because she wanted to uphold people's freedoms and the social and emotional benefits the program provided. She asked the Board to continue allowing the program in Washoe County.

Ms. Sandee Tibbett expressed discontent regarding Chair Hill's interview with *Nevada Newsmakers*. She thought there were flaws in the community that were not addressed by the Board. She asserted the citizens constantly brought solid solutions to the Board, but their suggestions fell on deaf ears. She claimed no one in the community had ever referred to the color of Manager Brown's skin. She believed people stayed for the entirety of BCC meetings because they cared about the County, not because they were paid to do so.

Ms. Betty Thiessen wondered what happened to the contract with the Elections Group. She thought the contract had been denied by the Audit Committee and hoped the County did not retain the firm. She asserted she was not paid to be present at meetings, she was there because she cared about Washoe County and her family's future in it.

Mr. Roger Edwards declared he wanted DQSH removed from the community. He stated he made himself a lobbyist badge, so it was clear to everyone that he was a lobbyist for the public. He remarked he attended his first Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) meeting on January 1, 2000, and had served the community in that capacity for 23 years and was never paid to do so. He asserted the people who regularly attended BCC meetings were not organized, they had a common knowledge of what the community did and did not need. He pointed out that the BCC members were elected officials who the people counted on to hear their concerns. He believed the voices of the people were important.

Mr. Mac Rossi spoke in favor of the Dandini Spectrum housing project. He noted half the project's property was located in the City of Reno's jurisdiction and half was in Washoe County's jurisdiction. He reported the City of Reno had already approved 200 units on its side of the property.

Mr. Ilya Arbatman stated he was the chair of the Ward 3 neighborhood advisory board, a local chess teacher, and worked in youth programming at the Holland Project. He asserted he loved his community and the local libraries. He believed libraries were a place where people could go to experience the world. He thought of libraries as museums of thoughts. He declared when he came across something in the library he did not agree with, he put it back on the shelf. He did not think of ways to get that content removed. He thanked Ms. Stears for her presentation and admired people who dedicated their lives to curating libraries. He said the point of a democratic society was for people to come together and talk about issues. He spoke in support of DQSH and opined it was a great way to get people to go to libraries and want to read. He postulated that the events were so popular because children wanted to engage with the world in a playful manner. He claimed DQSH events were not sexually explicit.

Mr. James M. Benthin provided documents that were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He noted he was not paid to attend BCC meetings. He was present to promote the careful and effective spending of Washoe County tax money. He stated capitalism was a system in which individuals with political connections and influence were favored. He was opposed to the County hiring the Elections Group. He claimed there was a list of issues from the previous election. He remarked Ms. Valerie White and Ms. Mary Gallegos put together a document that highlighted election issues and possible solutions. He believed the County did not need to hire an outside group to evaluate elections because there were already people in the County who could do that work.

Ms. Val White remarked that ADA Edwards recently told her it was his job to protect the Commission. She pointed out that taxpayers paid his salary. She wondered where the legal representation for the taxpayers was. She spoke about the Supreme Court case *New York Times v. Sullivan* from 1964 which ruled that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide open. She claimed while the First Amendment protected public scrutiny of official duties by public officials, the Supreme Court also held that criticism of an elected official's integrity and honesty was protected. She felt physically unsafe due to Chair Hill and Commissioner Garcia's actions and votes. She spoke about a lawsuit between Mr. Beadles and the County and opined there was nothing the District Attorney's (DA) Office could do to stop that case from progressing. She suggested the Board fire Manager Brown and Registrar of Voters (ROV) Jamie Rodriguez.

Mr. Alan Munson expressed concerns regarding DQSH. He asked the Board to choose LBT members who would consider the entire community. He disagreed with people who thought those in opposition to DQSH were a vocal minority. He thought DQSH was a type of grooming. He asserted people had the right to hold DQSH in private locations, not in taxpayer-funded facilities. He suggested the LBT allow Bible programs for children. He did not want children exposed to any type of sexuality.

Ms. Susan Vanness spoke about Chair Hill's interview with *Nevada Newsmakers*. She reported having video evidence of homeless people visiting libraries to watch explicit videos on public computers. She wondered what the Board could do about that since children were regularly present in libraries.

23-0541 AGENDA ITEM 17 Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Clark commended all the meeting attendees and communicated his desire to see Reno+Sparks Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ann Silver give a presentation regarding employment and job opportunities. He expressed his wish for the Board to vote on retroactive pay for County employees and mentioned the significant contributions of those employees. He announced his desire for a Board vote to return public comment to the beginning of Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meetings. He stated two vacancies on the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) needed to be filled to ensure community concerns were promptly addressed.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) staff for assisting a constituent with transportation to life-saving dialysis treatments.

Chair Hill announced an evacuation drill taking place in Crystal Bay (CB) and Incline Village (IV) the following day and advised more information could be found on the County's website.

* * * * *

4:44 p.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

ALEXIS HILL, Chair
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

Minutes Prepared by:
Taylor Chambers, Deputy County Clerk
Kendra DeSoto-Silva, Deputy County Clerk