

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

PRESENT:

Alexis Hill, Chair
Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair
Michael Clark, Commissioner
Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner
Clara Andriola, Commissioner

Lauren Morris, Deputy County Clerk
Eric Brown, County Manager
Mary Kandaras, Chief Deputy 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:

* * * * *

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by students from Glenn Duncan Elementary School.

* * * * *

23-0608 **AGENDA ITEM 3** Invocation Speaker- Father Chuck Durante: Chair, Nevada Interfaith Association

Chair Hill expressed her excitement about the inclusion of an Invocation at the beginning of Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meetings, an idea proposed by Commissioner Andriola. Father Chuck Durante said he was a native Nevadan and could not recall an Invocation being done previously to begin meetings. He stated that he was honored to have been invited and led the Invocation.

10:04 a.m. **The Board recessed.**

10:07 a.m. **The Board reconvened with all members present.**

23-0609 **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Garcia expressed condolences regarding the deaths at the Air Races on September 17, 2023.

Commissioner Garcia addressed the visiting students from Glenn Duncan Elementary School, first in Spanish, then in English. She wished everyone a happy Hispanic Heritage Month and shared her pride in the increasing representation she had seen in local and State government, but also noted there was more work to be done given that one in four Washoe County residents were Hispanic or Latino.

Commissioner Garcia requested a meeting with staff and/or her fellow Commissioners to explore the inclusion of a short Land Acknowledgement statement to be read by the County Manager at the beginning of meetings with an Invocation.

Commissioner Clark drew attention to recent events related to the Community Homelessness Advisory Board (CHAB) meeting on September 11, 2023. He noted significant discrepancies between narratives provided to the CHAB by Cares Campus management and residents and suggested additional research be done to ensure residents were treated fairly. He provided documents related to these events which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He began to read the documents, but Chief Deputy District Attorney (Chief DDA) Mary Kandaras interjected to provide guidance about the specialized notice required by Open Meeting Law (OML) in relation to the accusation or negative characterization of a staff member.

Commissioner Clark provided an update about his continued commitment to seniors, and what he had observed and tasted in recent visits to senior centers in the region. He wanted the senior nutrition contract to be revisited to see if healthier, more appealing options could be introduced. He returned to his previous point about the Cares Campus and requested an investigation into the facts of the situation with the individual who contacted him the week prior.

Vice Chair Herman asked for a show of hands from members of the public in the Chambers who would support the reinstatement of public comment at the beginning of meetings. Chief DDA Kandaras affirmed that meeting participation in an orderly manner presented no issue.

Commissioner Clark requested an agenda item for a discussion and vote to reinstate public comment at the beginning of meetings. He wanted to know where each Commissioner stood on this issue. Chief DDA Kandaras noted that although she did not mind the audience's show of hands, she did caution against immediate Commissioner replies to this question, which would veer into deliberation and potential action on an item that was not agendized. Commissioner Clark reiterated his request for an agenda item and added that he would like this to take place sometime in 2023.

Commissioner Andriola expressed appreciation to Father Durante for his Invocation and to all the Commissioners for their support of the addition of the Invocation to meetings. She joined Commissioner Garcia in expressing deep condolences about the recent loss of life at the Air Races.

Chair Hill informed Board members about a site visit she and Commissioner Garcia paid to the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (STMWRF). She added that a rate study would come before the Board in October 2023, and it was valuable to see the work being done, including the construction on the site.

Chair Hill reminded Board members about the two-hour rule on time for staff requests. Requests for facts, research, or other information that would take more than two hours of staff time were required to be agendaized and brought to the Board.

23-0610 **AGENDA ITEM 5** Presentation by Leslie Mix, Business Relations Specialist, with Sierra Nevada Job Corp on program highlights and experiences, including academic skills and employment journeys.

Sierra Nevada Job Corps (SNJC) Business Relations Specialist Leslie Mix provided a brief overview of the history and purpose of SNJC, highlighting the emphasis on skills training and career development opportunities provided to students as alternatives to an academic degree. She introduced two Job Corps students, Cheyenne Pope, and Hannah Williams, who spoke about the positive impact of Job Corps on their lives and careers.

Ms. Cheyenne Pope said she sought out SNJC after she went through some hard times, including mental health challenges and leaving her job without having another one in place. At the time, she thought she would take a small break, recuperate, and then apply for a new job. She shared that she was out of a job for two years, which was much longer than she projected. She heard about the Job Corps program as a good opportunity for young adults to get back on their feet. She said the program felt like the last chance to get herself together, and she was relieved to have listened to herself in applying to the program. She enrolled in the Pharmacy Technician program and said she felt a return of the fire in her chest helping her to achieve her dream along with the support of her peers and instructors.

Ms. Hannah Williams, Vice-President of the Job Corps Student Government Association, said she went to Job Corps seeking an opportunity to grow and learn. She shared that she was originally from Africa and relocated to Nevada in 2009. Out of a desire to help people, she pursued the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program with SNJC.

Ms. Mix extended an invitation for the Commissioners to visit the site.

Commissioners expressed their support for SNJC's vocational training options as alternatives to an academic path and strongly encouraged both students to continue pursuing their career goals.

DONATIONS

- 23-0611** **6A1** Recommendation to: (1) accept item donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$50.00]; and (2) accept donation from Grace Community Church, a non-profit religious organization, to Washoe County Human Services Agency Homelessness Fund to support welfare activities in the amount of [\$20,000.00] retroactive for the period July 1, 2023 through July 31, 2023; and direct the Comptroller’s Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0612** **6A2** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$2,065.00]; and (2) accept donations from various donors to Washoe County Human Services Agency Child Protective Services Fund to support welfare activities in the amount of [\$56,131.39] retroactive for the period July 1, 2023 through July 31, 2023; and direct the Comptroller’s Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0613** **6A3** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$15,541.93]; and (2) accept a donation from a donor to the Human Services Agency - Senior Services Fund used to support seniors in our community in the amount of [\$500.00] retroactive for the period July 1, 2023 through July 31, 2023; and direct the Comptroller to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Items 6A1 through 6A3 be accepted.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 7A1 THROUGH 7C3

- 23-0614** **7A1** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Communications; Monthly Statements/Reports; Annual Statements/Reports. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 23-0615** **7B1** Recommendation to acknowledge receipt of the audit procedure materials from the County’s external auditor Eide Bailly, LLP which provides an overview of the plan for the audit of the financial statements and schedule of expenditures of federal awards of Washoe County as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, including a summary of the nature, scope, and timing of the planned audit work. Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)

- 23-0616** **7C1** Recommendation to accept the Energizing Rural Communities Prize Phase One Partner from the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations in the amount of [\$100,000; no County match] retroactive for the period of July 14, 2023 through June 30, 2024; retroactively authorize the County Manager to execute the prize award documents; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. This award program is meant to incentivize the development of clean energy projects in rural or remote areas of the United States. The prize offers funding to kickstart development of clean energy projects and is intended to incentivize competitors to take the first steps necessary to develop a clean energy project. This project will assess needs, identify and evaluate resources, and put together a conceptual plan for a future renewable-energy system in the Gerlach area that is inspired by the people of Gerlach, informed by world-class energy expertise, and powered by cutting-edge technology. Manager's Office. (Commission District 5.)
- 23-0617** **7C2** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, Commission District Special Fund disbursement in the amount of [\$12,000.00] for Fiscal Year 2023-2024; District 1 Commissioner Alexis Hill recommends a [\$5,000.00] grant to Amplify Life -- a non-profit organization that is organized for charitable, religious, or educational purposes -- to support programs for clients with disabilities, a [\$5,000.00] grant to the Tahoe Prosperity Center -- a non-profit organization that is organized for charitable, religious, or educational purposes -- to support the 2023 Envision Tahoe Venture Summit, a [\$1,000.00] grant to Reno Bike Project -- a non-profit organization that is organized for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support access to affordable recycled bikes, and a [\$1,000.00] grant to India Association of Northern Nevada - a non-profit organization that is organized for charitable, religious, or educational purposes -- to support the promoting of Indian culture creating a positive, enjoyable and nurturing friendships and the Dandiya Hahotsav event; to approve Resolutions necessary for same; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary disbursements of funds. Manager's Office. (Commission District 1.)
- 23-0618** **7C3** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, Commission District Special Fund disbursement in the amount of [\$15,000.00] for Fiscal Year 2023-2024; District Commissioner Mariluz Garcia recommends a [\$5,000.00] grant to Be the Change Project -- a nonprofit organization created for religious, charitable or educational purposes -- to work with artists and kids to make murals and sculptures providing art to the community; a [\$5,000.00] grant to Nevada Museum of Art - a nonprofit organization created for religious, charitable or educational purposes -- to support the new Education and Research Center; a [\$5,000.00] grant to Domestic Violence Resource Center-- a nonprofit organization created for religious, charitable or educational purposes -- to support their emergency

shelter and transitional housing residents; approve Resolutions necessary for same; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary disbursements of funds. Manager's Office. (Commission District 3.)

Chair Hill highlighted Item 7C1, the Energizing Rural Communities Prize from the United States (US) Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Clean Energy (OCE), awarded for the project in Gerlach, and congratulated Vice Chair Herman on the receipt of the first phase of the grant. She thanked Commissioner Garcia for Item 7C3, the donations for Be the Change Project (BTC), the Nevada Museum of Art, and the Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC).

On the call for public comment, Mr. Colin Robertson, Nevada Museum of Art Charles N. Mathewson Senior Vice President of Education and Research, thanked the Commission for its investment in the Museum's expansion, and Commissioner Garcia for her proposed additional financial support. He spoke about the significance of the \$60 million expansion and mentioned numerous benefits the Museum provided to Washoe County residents. He shared two images of the expansion, which were placed on file with the Clerk.

Mr. Bruce Parks asserted that he was not a paid lobbyist but was a citizen lobbyist. He spoke about Agenda Item 7C2 and requested that Chair Hill recuse herself from voting on the donation to the Tahoe Prosperity Center (TPC), as she was a board member of that organization, and he felt it was a conflict of interest.

Ms. Kristen Kennedy, Executive Director of the DVRC, thanked Commissioner Garcia for her recommendation of support for the emergency shelter and transitional housing residence, and to the entire Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for its consideration. She provided a synopsis of the DVRC's history and current services, along with recent survivor success story highlights.

Mr. Kyle Isacksen thanked Commissioner Garcia for her proposed grant to BTC. He stated the work on the Wedekind Road mural project was continuing and had been a huge success. He cited additional funding sources and community partners who came together to enable the painting of five murals that would replace older ones that had aged out. He emphasized the positive community-building impact of these projects for people from a variety of backgrounds.

Ms. Debbi Sauk expressed certainty regarding the good done by these charities, and the charities she chose to support, but stated her opposition to the tax dollars being given away in Agenda Items 7C2 and 7C3.

Chair Hill stated she was remiss on Item 7C2 and confirmed her board membership with the TPC, though she noted it was listed on the agenda, and was an assignment consistently given to the Commissioner representing Tahoe. She said she would be voting on the item.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Chair Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7C3 be approved. The Resolutions for same are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

23-0619 **AGENDA ITEM 8** Appearance and presentation by Washoe County Emergency Management Administrator Kelly Echeverria to update the Board on the Regional Strategic Emergency Management Goals, the Integrated Preparedness Plan, and collaborative preparedness efforts throughout the region.

Washoe County Emergency Management (WCEM) Administrator Kelly Echeverria conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Regional Preparedness Program; Emergency Management Basics; Regional EM Strategic Plan 2020-2025; Vision Mission; Goals; GOAL 1: Strengthen Homeland Security Program; GOAL 2: Encourage mitigation strategies in developing resilience to natural & man-made disasters; GOAL 3: Create a coordinated approach to increasing a culture of preparedness for regional hazards throughout the region.; GOAL 4: Coordinate the region’s responding resources to natural & manmade disasters; GOAL 5: Facilitate regional recovery actions related to natural & man-made disasters; GOAL 6: Meet annual EMAP reporting requirements; Regional Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP); Preparedness Priorities; How We Get There; 1. Operational Coordination; 2. Operational Communication; 3. Mass Care Services; 4. Community Resilience; 5. Fatality Management Services; Additional Efforts; Preparedness; Partnership Building; Thank You.

Ms. Echeverria began with an overview of emergency management basics prior to providing community-specific information. She cited the “POETE” system her department used to advance their programs, noting “POETE” stood for Planning, Operations, Equipment, Training, and Exercises. She introduced the Strategic Plan, which was a regional plan outlined for five years within WCEM that differed from the County’s Strategic Plan, and she mentioned the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP), saying she would go into further detail on those items later in the presentation. She explained details of the Regional Emergency Management Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2025, which she said was created with partner buy-in from all jurisdictions including the Cities of Reno and Sparks, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC), the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH), the Washoe County School District (WCSD), and the Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RTIA).

Ms. Echeverria observed the WCEM Strategic Plan began with the Vision and Mission, which was to create a safer, more resilient community and engage in partnership with the whole community in meeting those objectives. She shared that WCEM was working with the Critical Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) on Goal 1. They were conducting security assessments of County properties and community partner properties to enhance security measures and create facility resilience. She said they were also focused

on preparedness as they moved away from pandemic times and were now able to get back out into the community and ramp up program efforts in that area.

Ms. Echeverria highlighted the “GOAL 2: Encourage mitigation strategies in developing resilience to natural & man-made disasters” slide. She provided timelines for the goal and noted the first two bullet points were related to the Hazard Mitigation plan and the Truckee River Flood Response Action Plan (FRAP), both of which would be updated in 2024 and hopefully accepted in 2025. She shared enthusiasm about a newly hired Mitigation Coordinator who would begin in October 2023 and would be working to build the mitigation program and promote resilience throughout the region as a facilitative leader amongst all their partners.

Regarding Goal 3, Ms. Echeverria stated the focus was on mutual assistance between states and indicated WCEM was working with the Nevada Division of Emergency Management (NV DEM) on creating a mass care plan between California and Nevada. She said WCEM promoted the professional organization the Nevada Emergency Preparedness Association (NEPA) and collaborated with regional partners to identify preparedness goals.

Ms. Echeverria provided a high-level summary of Goal 4, indicating the aim was to be inclusive of all community partners, increase information sharing and communication in disasters, and continue improving the use of WebEOC (Web Emergency Operations) and Perimeter mapping software. She reminded everyone of the achievement of the “twice-accredited” status held by WCEM and said the next accreditation process would occur in 2025. She introduced the Regional IPP, which was developed annually through a WCEM workshop process with all regional partners. She observed that the IPP was based on preparedness priorities and provided guidance for the next three years. Additionally, WCEM participated in the State-level IPP workshop, which was held in the fall. As a regional group, they were able to identify five preparedness priorities: Operational Coordination, Operational Communication, Mass Care Services, Community Resilience, and Fatality Management Services, which she noted were not listed in order of priority.

Ms. Echeverria then turned attention to the question of “How We Get There,” which was addressed in a series of slides revisiting the POETE steps that were applied to each preparedness priority. She provided details on the slides, starting with the Operational Coordination bullet points “Regional Emergency Operations Plan (REOP),” “County Emergency Communications & Public Information Plan,” and “Damage Assessment Plan,” which WCEM was currently working on. She said they were wrapping up the Damage Assessment Plan and the REOP was scheduled for next year. Under the Organization & Equipment heading, she noted they reorganized the call center using existing technology and made it more functional; WCEM tied its call center in with Washoe 311 for a more seamless transition. She noted they were constantly reevaluating their sections at the Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC) to make sure they adequately prepared for coordination with both field operations and support for the community. She noted they were updating their technology to ensure they were continually

able to function at the REOC, as there was a lot of technology there from a previous Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) approval. WCEM had undertaken numerous additional trainings including two alternate REOC exercises to address the question of operating from different headquarters if they were unable to run operations from the usual Spectrum Boulevard location. They recently tested one alternate at South Valleys Library and one at Parasol.

Ms. Echeverria continued with Operational Communications, which had the same POETE fields, though the specifics differed. For example, she noted this domain was more focused on sheltering, and she highlighted the recent procurement of shelter trailers for animal services as the type of action that would fall under this priority. She also acknowledged the partnerships with the Red Cross and the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) which helped with shelter trailers. WCEM was committed to ensuring their infrastructure was sound and ready and that they were able to communicate with the community in a disaster. They were providing training to partners as well as undertaking their own training to be able to operate.

Ms. Echeverria described the current priorities of work for Mass Care Services. In collaboration with the Red Cross, they were working on developing a comprehensive shelter network. WCEM was documenting and mapping out shelter locations as part of the plan update so they could put pre-disaster contracts in place to ensure a seamless transition to opening a shelter. She noted this effort was happening elsewhere in the State also. She said WCEM recognized a deficiency during the Caldor and Dixie fires when they needed to open a shelter locally, but the national Red Cross shelter system was down and unusable, triggering a reassessment of the local system and enhanced commitment to advance planning.

Ms. Echeverria said WCEM was always building toward Community Resilience. She emphasized the departmental focus on mitigation and the importance of up-front investment in trying to make the community more resilient. She stated that with better preparation, there was less impact on the community when disasters happened, and there were a number of ways to do that. She thought there were a lot of opportunities to get creative with these efforts, and when the new staff member focused on mitigation started in October 2023, they would work with community partners like Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) and UNR to create increased resilience throughout the community.

Ms. Echeverria described the scope of Fatality Management Services, which included working with the Medical Examiner's (ME) Office on their plan. She also reported they were improving the Family Assistance Center Annex to provide better family member and reunification process support in case of a mass casualty incident. WCEM was incorporating lessons learned from the Las Vegas Resiliency Center that developed in response to the October 1, 2017, shooting, recognizing the long-term recovery goals and post-event support needed. She shared that WCEM participated in a triennial simulation exercise hosted by the airport where they were able to test their disaster response plans.

Ms. Echeverria moved into the “Additional Efforts” slide. She shared information about an increasing number of preparedness events. She cited tabling at events where WCEM handed out information and spoke with community members about their individual plans. She also highlighted the preparedness fair they hosted in Incline Village (IV), their presence at the recent Milk and Honey Festival, an upcoming community forum in IV to address community concerns, joint messaging with partners for preparedness month, and presentations at citizen advisory boards (CABs) and neighborhood associations to talk through processes and improve understanding about what evacuations looked like. She noted there was a video being created to help set expectations for the public about what to expect in evacuations and how to better prepare themselves.

Ms. Echeverria emphasized the importance she and WCEM placed on partnership-building and fostering relationships, which she indicated was half of emergency management. They were working with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and Nevada Highway Patrol (NHP), and both agencies were able to participate in the IV exercise. She mentioned that WCEM was also maintaining open communication with California jurisdictions including Placer and El Dorado counties, the town of Truckee, and South Lake Tahoe about operations, evacuations, and infrastructure. She noted this kind of communication was paramount across state lines to ensure an effective response to disasters that crossed jurisdictional boundaries. They were also collaborating with the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) and NV DEM on a mass care plan and ensuring that should they have to go across borders they were able to do so seamlessly. She mentioned joint efforts with partner agencies from other counties in Nevada, and that WCEM was offering support to Emergency Managers in surrounding counties who were relatively new in their positions. She said they had done the pilot project of Perimeter for Carson, Douglas, Storey, and Washoe counties. The Perimeter tool provided consistent messaging to the public and aided in partner agency support across jurisdictional boundaries. Finally, she mentioned security assessment work happening jointly with CISA, and future regional resilience-building projects with them.

Chair Hill thanked Ms. Echeverria for her leadership, ongoing relationship building, and for making sure Washoe County maintained a presence in emergency response, even in situations outside of the County.

Commissioner Clark asked County Manager Eric Brown and Chief Deputy District Attorney (Chief DDA) Mary Kandaras for clarification about what dialogue he was permitted to have with the presenter, and whether he could talk directly to department heads at the dais without getting permission. Chief DDA Kandaras cited the Board of Commissioners Rules of Procedure Handbook Rule 9.6.1, which stated the Commissioners would go through the County Manager or the Assistant County Manager (ACM) for requests for staff time, and she did not believe this rule was applicable in a meeting. She observed this rule governed requests outside of meetings. Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Echeverria for her great work and noted that the in-depth training and work that she and her crew did to protect people went far beyond what most County citizens realized. He said with the major freeways, airport, and wildland fires, many unfortunate opportunities could arise in Washoe County. Recalling the recent Milk and Honey Festival that he

attended, he expressed concern for the comfort of WCEM staff at outdoor events. Ms. Echeverria assured him there was a pop-up tent available for use at the discretion of staff and volunteers.

Ms. Echeverria noted a missed slide, which addressed how Commissioners could help. She wanted to highlight that knowing the “W’s and H” of emergency management (the What, Where, When, Why, and How) were areas that she hoped she had adequately covered in the presentation, but she welcomed Commissioners to contact her directly or through the County Manager with additional questions or concerns. She said it would be phenomenally helpful for Commissioners to help constituents understand personal preparedness, and she would be happy to provide more information, materials, or training on how to facilitate those conversations.

Commissioner Clark asked Chief DDA Kandaras about the notation of Commissioners leaving the dais, which Chair Hill stated was an appropriate topic for Commissioner comments, but not for the Emergency Management Presentation, which was the current item under discussion. She communicated her intent to preserve the order of the meeting.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Ms. Echeverria and noted the devastating community impacts from the recent fires in Maui, Hawaii, which persisted month after month post-emergency. She noted there was a lot of conversation about preparedness and mitigation but asked for Ms. Echeverria’s opinion about how the region was doing in response to disasters and the general aftermath of a major crisis. Ms. Echeverria responded that the community had been fortunate in not experiencing disasters on the scale of Maui, for example, but she did feel confident in the ability of the community to come together and support one another. She cited examples of the 2011 Air Races incident, the Sparks Middle School shooting, and regional fires to show how people came together to ensure needs were met. She did note there were gaps in the community’s ability to respond that they were actively working to close but reiterated her confidence in people coming together when needed.

Commissioner Andriola commended the work of Ms. Echeverria and the WCEM team on their disaster preparation efforts. She said it was important to understand the presentation and the dedication that preparedness took in time, discussion, planning, practice, training, and exercise. She thought the relationships this region had were to be commended by all, because in the case of a disaster, it took everyone to know and be ready to execute the plans, regardless of new challenges or state lines. She thanked Ms. Echeverria for her leadership and her team creating a strong network of all regional partners working together.

23-0620 **AGENDA ITEM 9** Presentation and discussion by Eric P. Brown, County Manager, and Quinn Korbolic, IT Manager. A report and discussion on the unified 911 Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and the Law Enforcement Records Management System Agreement and associated agenda items, and a review of next steps for implementation of the regional systems.

Chair Hill indicated there would be a Block Vote for Items 10, 11, 12, and 13 following the presentation.

County Manager Eric Brown conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Regionalization of Dispatch, EMS & Fire; Core Principles and Project Outcome; Project Objective; Dispatch Regionalization Update Changes (video); GAP Analysis Report; Regionalization Project Approach; Federal Engineering Observations; Regionalizing the 911 Process; Thank You.

Manager Brown explained the Unified Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Law Enforcement Records Management System (RMS) Agreement project, which commenced in July 2022, was a joint project that was sponsored by Washoe County, the Cities of Reno and Sparks, and the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA). He stated the project objective was to design a regional 911 call process that would serve the community by prioritizing the user experience and appropriate deployment of resources for a reduction in duplicated processes, improved use of technology and resources, and simplified governance. He added the current system presented problems for the 911 caller experience and the user experience, and it might involve transferring 911 calls several times to multiple agencies depending on the circumstances, which could be stressful for the caller in need of assistance. He described how the project began based on a gap analysis and was centered around governance, organization, foundation, and funding, all of which he defined in relation to the project. He recounted a concurrent meeting held in July 2022 with the Cities of Reno and Sparks that resulted in the councils and the Commission designating the City Managers and the County Manager to develop a regionalized dispatch emergency medical services (EMS) and fire solution based on the agreement that was reached. He stated Hexagon was selected for the CAD/RMS software and mentioned the formation of a working group comprised of agencies from across the region to work on the elements for what the deliverables should be. He indicated Federal Engineering, Inc. (FE) was chosen as the overall project facilitator and consultant, as FE had overseen similar regionalization efforts in hundreds of jurisdictions in the United States (US) and Canada. He added the initial FE recommendations and best practices were received in March 2023. He identified some key observations based on a report generated by FE.

Technology Services (TS) Department Information Technology (IT) Manager Quinn Korbolic conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Unified Computer Aided Dispatch and Law Enforcement Records Management Project; Unified CAD & RMS; Unified CAD/RMS – Four Pillars; Unified CAD/RMS Agreement – Cost Sharing (3 slides); Next Steps; Thank You.

Mr. Korbolic described how the Unified Governance agreement largely set the operational and management structure for the CAD/RMS system through the creation of a Manager's Board, an Executive Board, and a Change Advisory Board. He informed the agreement designated Washoe County as the contracting party and fiscal manager, so the County would sign the contracts related to the project as well as manage a fund to help pay for the contracts, the responsibilities, and the obligations associated with those

contracts. He stated the agreement specified responsibilities related to the management of the CAD/RMS system in addition to establishing a cost-sharing framework, which was defined in the agreement. Mr. Korbolic specified a rigorous regional selection process was employed for choosing software, and he identified Hexagon's experience with implementing and supporting large multiagency CAD/RMS systems as one of the main reasons it was selected. He claimed the new referenced technology would transfer information obtained from the first 911 caller to REMSA so emergency medical issues could be promptly addressed. He clarified the contract with Hexagon would set the implementation schedule for the software at 27 months and provided a detailed statement of work (SOW) defining the roles and responsibilities of Hexagon and partner agencies. He assured that Hexagon would provide services to help regional partners transition from the existing CAD/RMS to the Hexagon platform.

Mr. Korbolic spoke about how, through the contract and the agreement, Washoe County, the Cities of Reno and Sparks, and REMSA were committed to working with Hexagon to ensure the success of the software transition through process analysis and optimization, system installation and configuration, training, and ongoing operational support. He noted staff recommended the Commissioners' approval of the contract with Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), which he labeled as the technology infrastructure that the Hexagon software would be installed on. He stated there would be coordination with HPE to install two separate systems that would work at a high availability configuration so one system could continue working immediately and seamlessly in the event the other system stopped functioning. He added the two systems would be geographically dispersed. Mr. Korbolic mentioned FE assisted with the project since its introduction and noted staff hoped FE would continue to help with project management and implementation of the new system. He indicated the total cost of the software and restructuring during the implementation period was approximately \$8.2 million. He noted the anticipated date of completion of implementation for the CAD/RMS system was late January to February 2026, and the new CAD/RMS system was intended to go live in the spring of 2026. Mr. Korbolic offered to respond to questions.

Vice Chair Herman asked a question regarding how many more employees would be needed to handle the project. Mr. Korbolic stated a Public Safety Coordinator position was approved within Washoe County to internally manage the project, and that employee would continue to work with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) to act as a bridge between the WCSO and IT. He assured that through the 911 Emergency Response Advisory Committee and each of the involved agencies, there were positions designated to assist as system administrators for the CAD, and those positions would be funded by the 911 Surcharge Funds. He added each agency would manage its own business.

Commissioner Garcia agreed with the statement "seconds do matter," and remarked that constituents were not concerned about jurisdictional lines when calling the Commissioners. She commended all the leadership during the previous year as well as Manager Brown's and Mr. Korbolic's efforts associated with the project. She commented about the regional partners trying to find solutions to deploy emergency resources

efficiently and expressed how she was drawn to the language used in the contract due to living in a litigious society. She mentioned asking Chief Deputy District Attorney (Chief DDA) Mary Kandaras if Washoe County would be vulnerable if the County was the lead on the contract and entered litigation, and Chief DDA Kandaras brought to Commissioner Garcia's attention the indemnification language used in the contract. Commissioner Garcia was interested in how the boards would function if something catastrophic or litigious occurred as a result of the involvement of multiple agencies. In response to Commissioner Garcia's question, Mr. Korbolic clarified an escalation ladder was developed within the governance process for addressing conflicts.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Manager Brown and Mr. Korbolic for the presentation and the redundancy, which she believed was important. She wondered about the maintenance or upgrades that were projected for the new system after the spring of 2026 when it had been launched. Mr. Korbolic responded that the contract with Hexagon was a five-year contract, and Hexagon would provide maintenance and support throughout the period of the contract. He mentioned Hexagon had a hotline that operated at all times to provide assistance when needed. He stated the CAD system was web browser-based and could be used with the correct website and log in. He informed that the updates and upgrades would be applied through the web system by Hexagon in coordination with Washoe County twice a year, and each user would automatically see the updates. He added an extension of the contract with Hexagon would need to be considered after five years depending on whether Hexagon and the software were performing as expected.

Chair Hill commended Mr. Korbolic, Manager Brown, staff, and the regional partners. She noted that REMSA had approved its contract, and Mr. Korbolic confirmed the City of Reno had already approved the Unified Governance agreement the previous week. Chair Hill remarked about the difficulty of collaborating with other government agencies and supported observing how Washoe County and the regional partners worked together with the technology using a slow approach. She commented that technology was the most important piece being considered and mentioned how governance could be assessed with dispatch going forward. She believed the new CAD/RMS system was a smart and prudent way to move forward. Chair Hill added the presentation hopefully highlighted that 911 calls sometimes took longer than they should and showed how the County was proactively working to fix the issue regionally so everyone could be included.

BLOCK VOTE – 10 THROUGH 13

23-0621 **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to accept and ratify the Hexagon Unified Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management Suite HxGN OnCall Suite Governance Agreement between the City of Reno, City of Sparks, REMSA, and Washoe County; and authorize the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to execute the Agreement. This agreement establishes an operational and management structure that allows for and governs the signatory partner agencies' participation in the ongoing governance, administration, and management of the Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management systems; and establishes the framework

to allocate costs of the systems to the partner agencies in amounts proportionate to their respective use of the system. Washoe County's portion of the costs to pay for the Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management systems is expected to be [\$3,176,800] of the total [\$8,259,423] for system implementation and [\$518,825] of the total [\$1,371,765] annually. Technology Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Janet Butcher indicated she was not a lobbyist, she spoke for herself, and she did not represent any organization or group. She stated she belonged to a lot of organizations. In response to her question, Chair Hill confirmed Item 13 was part of the Block Vote. Ms. Janet Butcher complimented the presentation conducted in Item 9 and recounted an instance when she told County Manager Eric Brown she did not like centralized things, though she was in favor of the new unified computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and records management system (RMS). She thought project management would be one of the first and foremost things that would be part of getting the project together. She assumed the Commissioners had an opportunity to review and digest the project before voting on it since the project was presented on the same day the vote was being held. She wondered if entities were spoken to that had a successful implementation and pointed out that the dais stated artificial intelligence (AI) was used in Washoe County. She hoped AI would not be involved with the new system going forward.

Ms. Debbi Sauk commented that Item 10 would require a new department to fund, monitor, and report. She stated Washoe County had primary responsibility for the referenced contract, so it would be responsible for collecting the other three agencies' fees. She indicated the County was paying 38 percent of the cost for the purchase and 38 percent of the ongoing cost for the system individually. She noted the contract was for five years with an automatic renewal of two five-year terms. She inquired about the other bids that were received. She asked where the contract fell on a continuum of bids and requested for the bids to be provided to the public for the sake of transparency in addition to the reasons Hexagon was chosen.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be accepted, ratified, and authorized.

23-0622 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to approve the contract between Washoe County and Intergraph Corporation through its Hexagon Safety, Infrastructure, & Geospatial division for upgrade of the regional Computer Aided Dispatch and Law Enforcement Records Management systems in Washoe County for a cost not to exceed [\$7,291,924.39] and a term of sixty months from the effective date; and direct the Purchasing and Contract Manager to execute the contract. Technology Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 10 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be approved and directed.

23-0623 **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to approve the contract, initiated through the State of Nevada Cooperative Cloud Solutions agreement (NASPO ValuePoint - Utah), between Washoe County and Hewlett Packard Enterprise for equipment and services to support the upgrade of the regional Computer Aided Dispatch and Law Enforcement Records Management systems in Washoe County for a cost not to exceed [\$62,493.84] in the first year with pricing based on an anticipated growth rate formula for subsequent years and a term of sixty months from the effective date; and, direct the Purchasing and Contract Manager to execute the contract. Technology Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 10 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be approved and directed.

23-0624 **AGENDA ITEM 13** Recommendation to award Washoe County Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 3221-24 and approve the Agreement for Landscape Maintenance Services to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, [staff recommends BrightView, at an estimated annual value of \$392,573.88 plus cost for repairs]; for the period upon approval through September 30, 2026 with the option to renew for two additional one-year periods, and authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the agreement on behalf of Washoe County. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 10 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be awarded, approved, and authorized.

23-0625 **AGENDA ITEM 14** Recommendation to appoint two candidates from a pool of applicants including: Shauna Adams, Danielle Anders, Ron Aryel, Katherine Ayzengart, Kim Barghouti, Paula L. Berkley, Jessica Brown, Andrea Caldwell, Wendy Colborne, Kate Crist, Reva Crump, Grace Davis,

Heather Drew, Robert Ellis, Brian Erbis, Maria Flores, Mel Grotberg, Erica Hall, Wayne Holland, Gianna M. Jacks, Valeria T. Koss, Patricia Kress, Sara Marcus, Robbie Maus, Virginia A. Nolte, Patricia Olmstead, Linda Park, Janice Porter-Moffitt, William R. Puchert, Sharon Reardon, Marie Rodriguez, Tami Ruf, Hagen Sandoval, Linda K. Schmitt, Roger Scime, Ann D. Silver, William Sims, Brad M. Stanley, Ryan Stark, Susan Steig, Andre Stigall, Geraldine F. Taylor, Owen Truesdell, CJ J. Walters, Charles Wellington II, Thomas C. Willadsen, Sylvia Willard, Nadienne Williams, Sara Zober, and Benjamin Zober to fill one midterm vacancy on the Washoe County Library Board of Trustees pursuant to NRS 379.020(3) beginning on October 1, 2023, and ending on June 30, 2026, and to fill one full-term vacancy on the Washoe County Library Board of Trustees pursuant to NRS 379.020(3) beginning on October 1, 2023, and ending on June 30, 2027. Library. (All Commission Districts.)

Program Assistant Alexandra Wilson briefed the Commissioners on the voting process to appoint the two candidates to the Library Board of Trustees (LBT). She instructed the Commissioners to select their top six candidates from the list of applicants for the first nomination round, and once a candidate with three or more votes had been identified, the Commissioners would vote for that individual to be appointed to the first position of the LBT, which was a full-term vacancy. She added that the candidate to receive the second greatest number of votes would be appointed to the partial-term position. She offered to respond to questions during each round.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Susan Stieg thanked the Commissioners for allowing her to address the Board. She mentioned her multiple years of experience working at an elementary school in San Jose, California, and her four-year experience as a librarian at Van Gorder Elementary School (VGES), during which she was responsible for selecting the materials for the VGES library and the data entry of the whole library to bring the facility online. She specified the funding activities were under her employment description. She mentioned she was currently retired, lived in the City of Reno, had grandchildren enrolled in the Washoe County School District (WCSD), and volunteered at VGES by assisting the library with shelving, processing, and covering the new items. Ms. Stieg believed she would be an asset to the LBT and would contribute fair and equitable opinions, which she clarified meant no partiality or favoritism of any group. She commented she was not in favor of censorship of materials offered at the County's libraries; however, she did not support allowing special interest groups preferential access, as she believed all groups should be allowed to read or present respective materials. She thought there should be standards in each library and indicated she would encourage the segregation of inappropriate material to children, who she stated were unable to critically evaluate literature that should be for adults only. She added she would encourage the LBT to equalize all special interest groups and use libraries as a forum for educational material, excluding social change. Ms. Stieg viewed the LBT team as a resource to assist and inform the Commissioners to make decisions that reflected the various opinions of a diverse society. She looked forward to serving in the event she was selected for one of the LBT positions.

Ms. Amy Peltekian displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She indicated she was attending the meeting as an individual citizen and appreciated the time. She stated she was a grandmother, a veteran, and a precinct captain. She commented she, along with 700 other concerned citizens of Reno, signed a petition on yourcommunityimpact.org, and they were trying to understand why adult entertainers were being brought into Washoe County's libraries and why the community's children were being exposed to them. Additionally, she questioned why sexually explicit books were currently on the shelves for children. She declared she learned the American Library Association (ALA) was a Marxist organization. She quoted ALA President Emily Drabinski saying the library was a location for Socialist organizing, which Ms. Peltekian and other members of the public were alarmed by. She claimed Marxists have had a deliberate program to sexualize children since 1910 and promoted LGBTQIA+ and gender-affirming material to intentionally confuse them. She spoke about how the elected officials of such states as Montana, Idaho, and Florida had removed funding from the ALA. Chair Hill asked Ms. Peltekian to provide the Commissioners with a recommendation on LBT candidates, and Ms. Peltekian stated she already emailed her recommendations to the Board. Chair Hill asserted Item 14 was regarding candidates for the LBT and asked Ms. Peltekian to direct her comments to that topic. Ms. Peltekian requested her time back to finish her public comment. She declared the Board was flagrantly introducing Marxism and gender ideology to children, which she conjectured was likely not the intention. Chair Hill reiterated her request for Ms. Peltekian's recommendations. Ms. Peltekian demanded Chair Hill to please stop interrupting her. She noted that 70 percent of the County's taxpayers were Christians and did not want their children to be sexualized or instructed in their gender ideology. She stated she and other members of the public expected the Republican Commissioners to recommend Christian representatives.

12:09 p.m. **The Board recessed.**

1:00 p.m. **The Board reconvened with all members present.**

As requested by Chair Hill, Chief Deputy District Attorney (Chief DDA) Mary Kandaras informed the public that it was proper for the Chair to ask the comments to be directed toward the current item, which was recognized by the Nevada Secretary of State (SOS), who enforced the Open Meeting Law (OML). She pointed out there was a general public comment period to make any generalized statements. She asked for those delivering public comments to please stay on topic if Chair Hill asked them to do so.

Ms. Valerie Fiannaca expressed frustration regarding her repeated requests for diversity and equity on boards and commissions in Washoe County. She stated there were ten conservative candidates who met the qualifications for the LBT, and she mentioned having been told that a liberal candidate was a shoo-in for the position. She advised any Republican who supported or voted for a Democrat over a qualified Republican would be sanctioned and would not be supported for reelection. She pointed out two of the Commissioners would be in that position. Ms. Fiannaca cautioned the Commissioners to vote wisely. She mentioned the Board's previous appointment had not met the requirements, and she noted the appointment should probably be reconsidered, as

he did not submit a letter of recommendation. She recommended Ms. Reva Crump, who came in second place during the previous Board appointment, and indicated Ms. Gianna Jacks was qualified. She also supported Ms. Linda Park and Mr. Robbie Maus.

Ms. Reva Crump commented one must feel the pulse of the community to effectively serve it and noted she and the Washoe County community grew up and were maturing together. She referenced the experience and education outlined in her application materials. She informed she taught at the middle school and high school levels of WCSD as well as at the university level with graduate students. She mentioned having served on homeowners' association (HOA) boards, which she indicated familiarized her with the fiscal responsibility and legal requirements of governing bodies. She attributed her fiscal management skills to spending half her career working in a medical research laboratory and the stringent guideline requirements of National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Science Foundation (NSF) grants. She shared she currently held voluntary positions with the Sierra Nevada Collie Club and the First Nevada Unit of the National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP). Ms. Crump identified her experience with writing government documents, publishing scientific papers, writing grants, fiscal balancing, and managing grants as qualities she could contribute to the LBT. She divulged that since her application in October 2022, she had passed her certification to be a parliamentarian in Robert's Rules of Order. She pointed out that Robert's Rules was the parliamentary authority for the LBT and demonstrated her continuing desire and ability to learn. She believed her addition to the LBT would provide a perspective that was not currently represented, which was that of a life-long science professional. She offered to assist the LBT in practicing and interpreting its bylaws as well as Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and asserted doing so would help with its efficiency and effectiveness. Ms. Crump used the word "connection" to define the function of the library within a community because the library had the potential to reach out and bridge many parts of a community. She added that the library housed the tools for connecting individuals to their past and everyone's growth for the future. She commented that the Washoe County library system had served her well throughout her life in the area and added it would be a privilege to participate on the LBT while the library continued to inspire and serve the community. She thanked the Commissioners.

Ms. Linda Park stated she was privileged to attend the meeting. She thought she would be a good fit for the LBT and mentioned having the opportunity to speak with Commissioner Andriola. She did not believe the LBT had ever received this much recognition before. She indicated she had prior experience serving on many boards. She noted she was Trustee of the Year for a California school board and was the board president before leaving Roseville, California, to return home to Nevada. Ms. Park expressed her love for Nevada and called it a treasure. She shared that she was married in the City of Reno and had two sons. She stated Nevada influenced everything about her, and she appreciated the art that was produced in the State. She described herself as a life-long learner and said she enjoyed working with people. She acknowledged not everyone agreed with one another, but she believed there needed to be a bridge to compel the public to see the LBT's perspective or listen to it. She recognized how important it was to bring consensus to individuals and convince them to understand what the board could offer. She

referenced Commissioner Andriola's inquiry during their phone conversation about why she wanted to serve on the LBT and stated that serving on the LBT was probably one of the most incredibly opportune experiments available. She observed she was looking for the opportunity to assist the people in the State, particularly in Washoe County, and she believed the budgeting for the library was one of the biggest constraints.

Ms. Victoria Myer recited a Bible verse and stated she was not paid by anyone to attend the meeting and never had been. As a resident of Washoe County for 45 years, she noted how passionate she was for issues pertaining to the County and expressed concern regarding the upcoming LBT appointments and the sexualization of the community's children by the County's libraries and schools. She commented in opposition to drag queen story hour (DQSH) and indicated she and other members of the public did not want sexually explicit books in the children's section of the libraries. Chair Hill requested Ms. Myer's recommendations for the LBT vacancies. Ms. Myer clarified the matter was not about banning books and instead was about making certain books available only to adults. Chair Hill requested Ms. Myer's time be paused.

Chief DDA Kandaras declared the government had an interest in conducting the people's business in an orderly manner free from disruption. Chair Hill warned she might call for another recess.

Chief DDA Kandaras continued, advising that the public might have the opportunity to make viewpoints known, though if the Chair asked the individual speaking to confine statements to the topic, she suggested doing so.

Ms. Myer continued and stated that not all the applicants completed the requirements. She indicated six applicants were recommended as individuals who would restore balance to the LBT, and she and other members of the public wished to ensure there were people with a moral compass on that board. She pointed out Washoe County Library Director Jeff Scott was appointed by the LBT trustees, and she avowed the County could not afford another term with Mr. Scott. Ms. Myer expressed disapproval toward Mr. Scott for promoting DQSH and having police reports against him, to which Chair Hill requested her time be paused. She asked Ms. Myer to please confine her statements to her recommendations for the two vacant positions on the LBT. She suggested providing her guidance and thoughts about how the Commissioners should choose among the applicants. She did not wish to ask Ms. Myer to leave the meeting. Ms. Myer recommended Ms. Linda Park, Ms. Linda Schmitt, Ms. Patricia Kress, Mr. Robbie Maus, Ms. Reva Crump, and Ms. Sharon Reardon as the candidates for the Commissioners to choose from during the first round of voting. She added she and other members of the public did not want the community's children to be sexualized. She reiterated her complaints regarding Mr. Scott and asserted the need for conservative trustees on the LBT who would accomplish the goal of voting him out.

Mr. Bruce Parks provided a document containing a list of candidate recommendations which was distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He commented individuals who were unable to follow instructions by not including a letter of

recommendation and/or a resume with their application should not be considered for appointment on the LBT because a person was informed by Washoe County staff that his application would not go forward without a letter of recommendation. Mr. Parks stated it would not be appropriate to consider anyone who did not follow the instructions and noted the list was narrowed down considerably once those applicants were eliminated from consideration. He said the list could be condensed further in the interest of inclusivity and diversity to the listed names provided to the Board. He mentioned how apparent it was to him and other members of the public that many of the County board and committee seats were predominantly occupied by non-conservative individuals. Mr. Parks addressed how the Board was asked not to appoint former members of other County boards and/or committees, which he referred to as “recycles,” and remarked that those individuals were permanent fixtures within the County. He observed the previous appointee to the LBT was a recycle. He reiterated the Commissioners were being asked to allow some conservative representatives on the LBT based on fairness, inclusivity, and diversity, and he claimed the Commissioners would be demonstrating to the whole County that they had no interest in those factors if they selected candidates who did not appear on the list he provided.

Ms. Julie Adams stated she had been a resident of Washoe County since 1982 and had raised two sons, noting they spent a lot of time at the library. She endorsed Ms. Patricia Kress, Ms. Linda Schmitt, Ms. Linda Park, Ms. Reva Crump, and Ms. Susan Stieg for the open positions on the LBT. She wanted a balance on the LBT so there could be healthy debate and the formation of some policies that prioritized children and their safety. She mentioned there was never anything sexually explicit at the library when her children were growing up, and she alleged that kind of material was currently displayed at eye level for youth. She commented that although the library was responsible for many wonderful things, the intense focus on all things sexual being emphasized to children caused a spotlight to focus on the LBT vacancies. Ms. Adams specified parents wanted wholesome truths highlighted for their children and indicated the library could focus on that and partner with parents but chose not to. She reported ALA President Emily Drabinski had called herself a Marxist lesbian, and she indicated Ms. Drabinski’s values were not the same as those of a majority of the parents who took their children to the library. She alleged Ms. Drabinski was in her position for her agenda and not for the good of children. She mentioned that Ms. Drabinski referred to conservative citizens as “book banners” because those parents did not want their children exposed to obscene material. She started reading into the record a post criticizing DQSH by the organization Gays Against Groomers, to which Chair Hill asked Ms. Adams to direct her comments to the topic of Item 14.

Ms. Janet Butcher displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She voiced her support for balance on the LBT and appointing a candidate who would equalize some of the issues that were occurring. She mentioned there were some very nice programs offered at the libraries and questioned why a bad apple would be added to the barrel. She declared new blood needed to be added to the LBT rather than recycled people. Ms. Butcher mentioned having a discussion with one of the Commissioners about devising a scorecard, and she offered to send the scorecard she created at home to the Board. She added that the scorecard took approximately an hour to complete after some research, so she did not understand why one was not prepared for this item that could be

presented to the public. She said she would have been in favor of a special meeting so the members of the community could listen to who the Board was selecting to fill the LBT positions. Ms. Butcher claimed she would not recommend anyone because she was certain there were two or three Commissioners who would not vote for whomever her recommendations were.

Ms. Debbi Sauk recommended appointing Ms. Reva Crump, Ms. Patricia Kress, or Ms. Linda Park, as it was necessary to balance the views of the LBT.

Ms. Sandra Burnell indicated she lived in Incline Village (IV). She echoed the public comments expressing support for a conservative candidate to serve on the LBT and noted the recommendations made by previous public commenters for Ms. Reva Crump, Ms. Linda Park, and Ms. Patricia Kress. She pointed out the Commissioners were provided a list of additional candidates who were inclusive of the public commenters' wishes. Ms. Burnell explained individuals delivering public comment were unable to specify why they chose the applicants they did, and she speculated she would be told by the Board she could not speak if she attempted to provide a reason for her recommendation, which she disagreed with. She was shocked that she could not use her three minutes of public comment to address why she wanted the Commissioners to give her a conservative member of the LBT, and she wished to talk about how all children should be protected from sexually explicit material, as it was germane to why she would be suggesting certain individuals. She hoped the Board would allow her the three minutes to express why the matter was so important. Ms. Burnell asserted children should not be exposed to explicit material and explained individuals who sat on the LBT had the authority to decide on behalf of the public. She wished for libraries to be like the video stores that required an identification card (ID) to prove a person was old enough to watch certain videos, and she requested a library with an atmosphere where 12-year-old children could not acquire explicit material any more than they could in a video store. She stated there was a reason why parents were supposed to be in control of what their children viewed, and explicit books could be available in an adult section where the parent could decide whether the child could read it. Ms. Burnell opined everyone should understand and respect that it was a parent's right to decide what their children saw. She thanked the Board for allowing her to specify her reasons for her recommendations and hoped subsequent public commenters could do the same.

Ms. Marie Rodriguez provided documents that were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She recounted the experience she shared with her granddaughter at the South Valleys Library prior to the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic. She recognized many of the LBT applicants loved books and had fond memories like hers of visiting the library as a child, with their child, or with their grandchild. She commented that all the applicants could agree they loved libraries. Ms. Rodriguez declared libraries were essential for some members of the community, including low-income families who relied on them for internet access, information, entertainment, and reading material, all of which other families might take for granted. She referenced a photograph of an entrance to the youth services of a Kansas City, Missouri, library, which was displayed and placed on file with the Clerk, and briefly talked about its history. She informed Kansas City was listed

as one of the best library systems in the United States (US). She described the type of place the library was. Ms. Rodriguez recalled being asked why she wanted to serve on the LBT and what she hoped to accomplish. She wished to help inspire and advocate for a library system that would surpass all the points she listed, and she planned to have others blown away by Washoe County's library system and what it could offer the community. She noted children were raised by their parents, educated by their school, and influenced by their community.

Mr. Bruce Foster displayed documents, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He thanked Commissioner Andriola for honoring the two pilots who tragically passed away on Sunday, September 17, 2023. He indicated he was a Washoe County resident of precinct 6411 and District 4. He referenced his document and commented that ALA President Emily Drabinski recently spoke at the 2023 Socialist Conference. He stated his recommendations were based on how adamant he and other members of the public were about seeing some balance on the LBT. They wanted individuals with conservative moral values to be considered because they believed there was a spiritual battle. He speculated Ms. Drabinski was joined at the hip with Library Director Jeff Scott, and he quoted Ms. Drabinski. He wished for the Commissioners to consider Ms. Patricia Kress, Ms. Linda Park, Ms. Reva Crump, and Ms. Linda Schmitt, who he indicated had conservative values, as well as other candidates who were thoroughly vetted. He questioned the book titled *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir* and encouraged reading the book because of its descriptions.

Ms. Kate Crist spoke about her childhood with her best friend's mother, who was a librarian, and stated libraries had been important to her since she was a young girl. She mentioned using libraries when she was attending college in order to access the information and research she needed to earn her degree. She noted, as a high school history teacher, that the library located on her campus and the libraries in her students' communities were critical for accessing technology and the world through the printed word. Ms. Crist expressed the significance of the library for her as a mother of two young children and talked about how her children loved borrowing books. She believed the library was important for the community as a place to gather and to have access to vital technology and information. She thought the work she completed during her career as a teacher and her current work with teachers and educational leaders on literacy positioned her very well for a seat on the LBT. She understood how public institutions were run as well as governing boards, budgets, and the elements associated with a cost-benefit analysis. She recognized how to enable the engagement of a diverse group of people with various sets of values in public discourse in a way for everyone to be heard. She noted some people got what they wanted while others did not, though they could come to a consensus on what was important.

Ms. Gianna Jacks displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She voiced support for herself as a candidate for a position on the LBT and, referencing the document, indicated her three young sons were the pride and joy of her and her husband's life. She mentioned her children loved books and Netflix. She recalled telling the Commissioners they should vote for her during the previous Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting she attended. She noted the LBT had two positions and a

lot to deal with. Ms. Jacks recounted the experience of filling out her application in October 2022 and summarized the qualifications provided in her resume. She thanked her husband for covering the local business they owned and her father for watching her children so she could attend the meeting. She commented that the LBT was a great checks and balance system, as a curator for a fluid library system with 12 libraries in the County, and she considered it to be a huge public system of wants and needs for a large variety of citizens. She believed a strong, dedicated supporter who could participate in the meetings and help, to an extent, with Robert's Rules of Order, should be considered for the LBT position. She mentioned her experience in politics and on boards and commissions in Carson City. She advocated for her placement on the LBT and appreciated the Board's time and vote.

Mr. Michael Barbuto indicated he was speaking to the Board as a husband, a father, a grandfather, a voter, a United States Navy (USN) veteran, a retired law enforcement officer of 27 years, and a precinct captain in District 4. He acknowledged and thanked the Board for the good it had done for Washoe County. He supported Ms. Reva Crump, Ms. Linda Park, Ms. Linda Schmitt, Mr. Robbie Maus, Ms. Patricia Kress, and Ms. Gianna Jacks because he did not think the LBT was balanced or well represented. He was saddened by the lack of representation for the conservative branch of the County, as he thought the County was supposed to be inclusive and provide equality so everybody's voice could be heard. Mr. Barbuto informed there was a deep concern expressed by many of his neighbors regarding past decisions of the LBT and mentioned conversing with his neighbors after dropping his two daughters off at the public schools they attended in the County. He reported most of the people he spoke to believed the occurrences at the library and toward the children were indecent, an offense to common law, and an outrage to public decency. He claimed no one cared about the books being in the library.

Mr. Alan Munson was not present when called to speak.

Mr. John Eppolito introduced himself as a former K12 teacher. He mentioned living in IV for 27 years and thanked the Commissioners for sitting on the Board. He expressed astonishment over the treatment of some of the early public commenters who were not allowed to finish speaking. He acknowledged Chair Hill became more lenient over time and remarked she had made a little progress. He indicated the reason for the large number of people attending the meeting was due to their opposition to exposing children to what many people would consider sexually explicit material. Chair Hill requested Mr. Eppolito return to speaking about the LBT candidates and maintained she did not intend to entertain a dialogue. Mr. Eppolito asked if Chair Hill was going to shut him down. He believed Mr. Parks, Ms. Myer, and Ms. Adams made many valid points when providing their recommendations for the LBT, so he supported considering their recommended candidates. He commented if people wished to expose their children to drag queens, they should be able to do so without using taxpayer funds, as people who were visiting the library with their own children should not be forced to see that.

Ms. Linda Schmitt indicated she applied for the LBT position before she was aware of what would unfold and had not asked anyone to use her name. She informed she was an executive director of a nonprofit that assisted unhoused women for the past 16

years and worked as a city clerk in the City of Sparks from 1994 to 2013. She mentioned her background in assisting with boards and commissions with Nevada Department of Business and Industry (B&I) Director Bruce Breslow, former City of Sparks Mayor Tony Armstrong, and former City of Sparks Manager Shaun Carey. She stated she applied for the position because she wanted to be a part of the community where she could make a difference. She noted how strong many of the candidates were, and she complimented Ms. Reva Crump and Ms. Patricia Kress. Ms. Schmitt believed it felt like everybody involved was fighting each other. In response to a question posed by Commissioner Andriola during a phone call conversation, Ms. Schmitt thought she could bring consensus to the LBT, and she believed it was important for people to listen to each other rather than shutting each other down. She expressed concern over the loss of the willingness to hear one another and the US being the American melting pot that it formerly was. She added she would love to serve on the LBT, called herself a strong candidate, and encouraged the Commissioners to vote for who they believed was right.

Mr. Scott Myer questioned if any members of the public in attendance were paid lobbyists, to which Chair Hill asked him to address his comments to the Board. Mr. Myer remarked he was trying to show the Commissioners there were no paid lobbyists present at the meeting. He indicated he would not provide any names to recommend for the LBT vacancies after speculating at least two of the Commissioners might be crossing the names out when they were mentioned. He claimed the disruptions at the meeting were due to the first public comment period being removed and observed Chair Hill was responsible for taking away the public's rights as voters and citizens. Chair Hill reiterated her request for Mr. Myer to return to the topic of Item 14.

Mr. Fred Myer commented he and other members of the public would like such library events as a veteran story hour, an indigenous peoples' story hour, a Christian story hour, and a Jewish story hour. He recommended Ms. Linda Schmitt, Ms. Patricia Kress, Ms. Linda Park, Ms. Reva Crump, and Ms. Gianna Jacks for the LBT positions. He thanked Commissioner Andriola for meeting with him and his wife and noted she was a swing vote. He pointed out that Commissioner Andriola represented a largely conservative district and urged her to vote for two of the six conservative individuals that he and other members of the public selected. He urged those who were conservative to vote for conservative candidates across the board and asserted there was no excuse for voting for someone on the left when the Board was already far left-leaning.

Ms. Margaret Martini commented that she attended multiple WCSD Board of Trustees meetings and criticized it for being biased and dysfunctional. She hoped the Commissioners would vote for candidates with right-leaning core values. She supported Ms. Gianna Jacks, Ms. Reva Crump, Ms. Linda Park, and Ms. Patricia Kress. She asserted public boards should be balanced and stated children should be protected. She declared diversity, honesty, and public decency along with moral values needed to be supplied to the LBT because it made important decisions regarding what people could view and read in addition to what programs were introduced. She asked the Commission to take the task of appointing candidates to the LBT seriously.

Ms. Tracey Hilton-Thomas observed there was one individual who was a second-place candidate through the previous selection process for the LBT vacancies, and she indicated if the individual was not included on any of the Commissioners' lists, that would be very suspect. She added the referenced candidate was certified as a parliamentarian. She claimed the LBT was violating Robert's Rules of Order and proposed establishing the ability to follow them as the primary qualification for the candidates. She suggested Ms. Reva Crump, Ms. Linda Park, and Ms. Gianna Jacks and expressed how impressed she was with Ms. Linda Park's background. Ms. Hilton-Thomas advocated for the Commissioners to consider and prioritize Robert's Rules of Order when making their decision on the matter.

Ms. Joni Hammond requested the Commissioners consider appointing candidates with family values and noted parents were the best judge of what was appropriate for their children. She spoke favorably of Mr. Michael Barbuto. She indicated her neighbors would no longer take their children to the library because they did not have the ability to be with their children at all times due to work, and they did not trust the libraries to keep certain books in a safe area to prevent the younger children from obtaining them. She suggested a lot of interest seemed to have been generated in the younger children due to the publicity related to the books available in the library and stated she spoke to many people who were not bringing their children there. She noted it was unfortunate because they all paid for the library. Ms. Hammond observed it was obvious the WCSD Board of Trustees had a uniform agenda after having attended several of its meetings. She indicated the best boards and committees encompassed a variety of opinions comparable to the BCC meeting and the community.

Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Wilson and spoke about Washoe County oftentimes reappointing individuals to boards. He noted there was currently a way to announce board vacancies to the public. He recounted instances involving vacancies on County boards, including an available Board of Equalization (BOE) position that gained more attention after advertising, appraiser positions for the County that were intended to be filled through reappointment, and a position on the Senior Services Advisory Board (SSAB) that took nearly eight or nine months to fill. He pointed out the board and committee positions were all voluntary and referenced Ms. Wilson's comment regarding the difficulty of finding volunteers. Commissioner Clark thought it was important for the County to advertise any availabilities so every citizen would know about them and have the opportunity to apply. He referenced The Rolling Stones' song "You Can't Always Get What You Want" to express that more people would be declined appointments, and he acknowledged the concerns of members of the public.

Commissioner Clark observed several individuals were admonished for speaking off-subject, which he disagreed with because public comment was permitted at the end of the meeting after the Commissioners already voted on the item. He questioned the point of communicating concerns after the vote. Commissioner Clark confirmed Chief DDA Kandaras was correct by the book when she spoke about the conduct when delivering public comment, but he asserted the issues could have been addressed had public comment been offered prior to the vote. He pointed out that the ranchers and farmers who attended

the meeting could not afford to stay all day to provide their opinions, and he thought it was time to offer public comment at the start of the meeting. He assured he would support people for the LBT positions who he believed would balance the board.

Commissioner Garcia asked Ms. Wilson to clarify whether letters of recommendation and resumes were required for the application process, to which Ms. Wilson replied they were not, although it was helpful for applicants to provide them. She added that many individuals in multiple instances applied for and were appointed to positions on Washoe County boards without a letter of recommendation or a resume.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Ms. Wilson for her hard work on this item. She strongly believed there needed to be a process so the Commissioners could provide feedback on a framework that would be fair and equitable. She acknowledged that County Manager Eric Brown, Ms. Wilson, and staff were developing such a process. She expressed her enjoyment of calling and speaking with all the applicants to ask them the same two questions and obtaining a lot of insight regarding why an individual would want to apply, what they wanted to accomplish, and what they indicated were the challenges within the library system. She firmly thought there needed to be balance on the LBT and stated that diversity and having differences were healthy for any board or committee, especially with public policy. She believed having an acumen for budgetary experience, leadership, and public policy was important in that balance. She concluded the quality of the LBT candidates was exemplary and hoped those who were not chosen continued to apply for positions. She thanked the applicants for their consideration to serve in such an important capacity.

Deputy County Clerk Lauren Morris read the Commissioner votes aloud. Chair Hill summarized the top candidates were Ms. Ann D. Silver, Ms. Gianna M. Jacks, Ms. Kate Crist, Ms. Shauna Adams, Ms. Wendy Colborne, Ms. Marie Rodriguez, Ms. Linda K. Schmitt, and Ms. Tami Ruf. Based on the number of votes each applicant received, Ms. Silver, Ms. Jacks, and Ms. Colborne were named the final candidates. Chair Hill directed the Commissioners to each select one of the remaining candidates. Ms. Morris read the results naming Ms. Jacks as the selected candidate for the full-term position.

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Gianna M. Jacks be appointed to the Library Board of Trustees for a term beginning October 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2027.

Chair Hill instructed the Commissioners to choose between Ms. Silver and Ms. Colborne for the midterm position. Ms. Morris read the results naming Ms. Silver as the selected candidate for the position.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Chair Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Ann D. Silver be appointed to the Library Board of Trustees for a term beginning October 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2026.

23-0626 **AGENDA ITEM 15** Recommendation to approve a resolution supporting the Truckee Meadows Public Lands Management Act and to request Nevada's federal congressional delegation to advance this federal public lands legislation to support conservation, recreation, and economic development in the Truckee Meadows region. Generally speaking and if ultimately passed by Congress and signed into law by the President, the Act allows for federal land to be made eligible for disposal/sale (anticipated 14,606 acres), creates permanent land conservation areas (anticipated 719,687 acres), conveys federal land to local government entities for recreation and public purposes (anticipated 4,701 acres), transfers additional federal land into trust for local tribes (anticipated 22,415 acres), and helps to fund additional land preservation and conservation projects statewide. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Assistant County Manager (ACM) Kate Thomas spoke about the consideration of a resolution to support the Truckee Meadows Public Lands Management Act (TMPLMA) also known as the Lands Bill. She said the legislation was not the work of Washoe County staff, but rather of United States (US) Senator Jacky Rosen and her staff, who worked diligently to convene hundreds of meetings of stakeholders to develop the draft legislation and maps. Ms. Thomas noted a list of those stakeholders was available in the Staff Report included with the documents for the September 19, 2023, Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting. Draft maps and billing were released on April 7, 2023, which kicked off a two-month public comment period. She stated that her office anticipated seeing updated maps and language with input from that comment period in the coming weeks.

Ms. Thomas provided a general overview, noting Lands Bills were a mechanism to categorize federal land, implemented by an Act of Congress. She added that Nevada had the highest percentage of federal land in the US, with more than 56,000,000 acres that were federally managed. This bill looked to designate more than 700,000 acres of that land into four categories. The first was Conservation, which was the largest category in this bill, containing nearly 716,000 acres. The second category was Tribal Trust Lands with over 26,000 acres including some cultural heritage acres set aside. The third category was for lands designated for potential economic development, which included 14,000 acres of land that could be nominated for development. The final category was approximately 4,700 acres for local government use. Ms. Thomas explained nine separate jurisdictions comprised this final category, including Reno, Sparks, Washoe County, the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), State lands, and the Washoe County School District (WCSD). She observed that County staff had been communicating with the Nevada congressional delegation. She reiterated this was not Washoe County legislation but noted the Office of the County Manager (OCM) had been hosting the information since it impacted Washoe County. Their efforts included establishing and maintaining the www.landsbill.org website, where draft language and maps could be found, to include the updated versions when they became available. The website also included an email signup option for people who wanted to receive updates. She said she was available to answer questions or capture

information to send along to Senator Rosen's office as the discussion about the Resolution continued.

Chair Hill thanked Ms. Thomas and asked the Board members if they had immediate comment, or if they were willing to defer Commissioner input and take public comment first, acknowledging that many people had been waiting a long time. There was consensus from Commissioners about hearing public comment first.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Taylor Adams, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN), acknowledged that there were multiple viewpoints on the Lands Bill. He noted the importance of the agriculture industry and the desire to preserve the incredible natural resources and recreation in the area. He said he understood the concern about growth and the challenges it brought. He thanked everyone for their work and deliberation, then proceeded to outline EDAWN's multifaceted support for this Resolution. He stated passage of the Lands Bill was critical in the ability to successfully deliver on commitments made to the region. He mentioned unprecedented growth in Nevada in the past decade and the economic principles underpinning the low tax environment. He also noted the growing cost of State, County, and municipal government in contrast to the static revenues from real estate taxes in Washoe County. He stated the only means of addressing those costs were growing the economy or reducing service. He said that while the region had historically experienced robust growth, there was now a shortage of land available for development, which was a significant problem that would be aided by the Lands Bill. He asserted alleviation of this problem would create jobs and opportunities that would allow children to stay in the area, own homes, build successful careers, and raise their own families. He said it would also benefit all public agencies in the region. He thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to speak, and for their service to the community.

Ms. Shaaron Netherton shared she was the Executive Director of Friends of Nevada Wilderness (FNW), which she stated had been operating in Washoe County for the last 40 years. She thanked the Commissioners and staff for the extensive time and effort they put into various versions of this Public Lands Bill over the years. She said FNW urged the Board to vote yes to move this Resolution along for the TMPLMA. She shared that FNW had been working cooperatively with Washoe County and many diverse stakeholders on this process for years and despite differences of perspective, she felt there were a lot of honest, robust discussions. She expressed her support for the compromises reached through these discussions while acknowledging that not everybody would get what they wanted from the Lands Bill. She said opportunities for public lands legislation were rare and with so much public land in the County, it truly took an Act of Congress to solve some of these issues. She advised taking advantage of the opportunity presented, which she said might not come again for a long time. She also added concern regarding misinformation about what this legislation would or would not do and shared a couple of examples. She stated there would be no impact on hunting or any ongoing mining. She said there were only a handful of claims in the conservation areas, and those would be grandfathered in, allowing development in the future if there was ever any mining activity. She added that FNW was

happy to provide all the maps of those claims. She stated the bill would have a very strong positive economic impact and would protect wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities for future generations. She thanked the Commissioners for their time and for the opportunity to express her support for this Resolution.

Ms. Valerie Fianacca stated the TMPLMA was larger than most people understood, specifically that it was part of a government plan to own 30 percent of all lands in the US by 2030. She said this would impede mining, ranching, agriculture, recreation, logging, and gas and oil production, which would cripple the economy. She expressed concern that the ultimate goal was total control of the population and that everyone needed to stand against this globalist control. She implored people to do some research if they had not already read about the proposed legislation.

Mr. Chris Reilly spoke on behalf of Tesla and began by sharing some history of the company's growth. Since breaking ground in 2014 they had grown to approximately 7,000 team members at the Gigafactory Nevada manufacturing facility. He also described the parallel growth of Panasonic, which now had 4,500 team members. He said that as these companies continued to grow, commuting for team members and their families had become problematic. He expressed support for the TMPLMA on behalf of Tesla and noted the continued, thoughtful growth opportunities it would open up for them in the region. He informed that approximately 2,000 Tesla team members used free shuttles and hosted vanpools to commute, a program which they would continue to grow. He reiterated support for the Resolution.

Mr. Helgo Orav expressed his opposition to designating additional wilderness in the Sheldon Wildlife Refuge. He detailed the degree of remoteness and the near-total absence of services or people in the area and felt that because of how well protected and preserved the Refuge already was, additional wilderness designation in the area at this time would be superfluous.

Mr. Louis Bubala, a resident of east Washoe Valley, shared his perspective as an outdoorsman and as Treasurer and Director with the Nevada Outdoor Business Coalition, a local 501(c)(3) that helped create the State Division of Outdoor Recreation. He expressed support for the middle ground this bill provided. He reported outdoor recreation was a significant economic driver for the State of Nevada, estimated at \$4 billion spent every year that came from activities like hunting, off-highway vehicles (OHVs), camping, fishing, birdwatching, and skiing. He noted many businesses made a direct living or secondary living from the support of these activities. He stated this proposal would increase the amount of land for activities like this, which would have a positive economic impact and keep Washoe County a "lifestyle town."

Mr. Bruce Parks opined that because Congress had not yet passed this legislation, BCC action would be preemptive. He expressed his adamant opposition to misuse of public lands for any reason and stated he was aware the federal government owned 86 percent of the land in Nevada, and 28 percent of the total land in the US. He felt compelled to point out that tribal land was government land. He contrasted the positive

economic impact mentioned by Mr. Bubala with the potential for tax revenue generated by new development. He referenced a Lands Bill passed for Clark County over 20 years ago, from which he stated less than half of the land brought under the State's purview was being utilized by humans, though it was accessed by various flora and fauna. He urged the reconsideration of support for this Resolution.

Mr. Scott Finley displayed a document, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He identified himself as a Washoe County resident with a military background in the financial management and comptroller career field of the US Air Force (USAF). He stated that the individuals and entities pushing the Lands Bill masqueraded with the veneer of environmentalism but were actually nothing more than eco-fascists. He suggested some supporters of the legislation had taken unscrupulous actions in an attempt to influence Commissioner votes, such as having artificial intelligence (AI) bots leave e-comments. He said the BCC must not only reject this Resolution but also make a formal declaration condemning these eco-fascists. He questioned how the Lands Bill would protect Washoe County's environment, given that it sought to take public land and turn it into land available to developers. He gave the example of his own property, which he said he selected in part because of its proximity to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. He feared passage of the Lands Bill would enable that adjacent land to be purchased by private developers, which could destroy parts of the surrounding environment. He acknowledged the importance of social stability but noted infinite growth was not possible in a finite system, including Washoe County. He referenced development in New York City and suggested skyward expansion was a better solution to additional development needs. He expressed concern that rather than being a "one and done," this bill would set precedence for additional public lands to be privatized, leaving inadequate land for future generations to enjoy.

Mr. Bill Thomas was not present when called to speak.

Ms. Janet Butcher displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She stated she was not a lobbyist and was not paid. She shared her experience with not seeing the public comment area on the www.landsbill.org website, but she found another uniform resource locator (URL) that did allow her to enter comments. She reached out to the email on the site to ask why the comment tab was not available. She noted her email was read, but she had not received a response. She informed Commissioners that the correspondence available on that site was from 2020, and it did not show anything from 2022 or 2023, which she felt was not in line with transparency goals. She stated the Cities of Reno and Sparks had already passed resolutions on this bill, and she believed a resolution carried weight. She commented that many in the community might not be aware of the legislation, and she wanted the Resolution to either be postponed or voted down that day. She said better transparency into the proposal was needed, and she hoped people who expressed opposition in 2020 could put forward their approval or opposition in a letter now to update how they viewed the changes that were made for this current version. Ms. Butcher observed from what she was able to glean thus far this Lands Bill might put mining out of business, would severely limit camping, hiking, and recreation of all kinds, and would take away hunting on the lands designated. It might have a disastrous impact on the ranchers.

She stated the citizen advisory board (CAB) meeting presentations were not enough to update and inform the community of the bill. She attended the Spanish Springs CAB meeting and noticed there were many who spoke against the bill and had questions. She observed the only people speaking in favor were City of Sparks Mayor Ed Lawson and a staff member from the County. She asked Commissioners to vote no on the Resolution that day, and until additional information could be supplied and more people in the County were made aware of its possible ramifications.

Mr. Dan Morgan, CEO of the Builders Association of Northern Nevada (BANN), expressed support for a well-balanced, comprehensive Lands Bill that addressed the economic development, housing, recreation, and conservation needs of Western Nevada, and Washoe County in particular. He said BANN very much looked forward to being part of the process and working with the BCC and County staff, the federal delegation, other jurisdictions, and stakeholders in a process that would provide the community with the greatest long-term strategic benefits that were very much needed.

Ms. Debbi Sauk pointed out that in the summary of this item, it said it would allow the federal government to sell the property, and she observed that if they already owned it, they could sell it anyway. She remarked the conversation was about 761,409 acres in total, and questioned how many tribes would participate in the 22,415 acres allotted to local tribes. She wondered what that acreage would be used for and listed possibilities like housing, gambling, and farming. She noted the land was already used for recreation like riding, hunting, and camping. She added this land was already being conserved, and there was no need to fund economic development projects all over the State. She said those areas should be responsible for themselves. She emphasized there was no need for the federal government to dispose of or sell public land, and that the highest and best use of the land was known by residents, not Washington, DC. She urged Commissioners to oppose the Resolution.

Ms. Maeve Ambrose expressed her view of the profound impact this decision would have on the Truckee Meadows region and provided the loss of life at the Reno Air Races event as an example of the long-reaching effects of BCC actions. She claimed the Lands Bill could have similar negative economic impacts in the future if passed, and that the transfer of BLM public lands in Northwest Washoe County into new National Conservation Areas (NCAs) and wilderness areas would result in a loss of grazing leases, mining leases, and unrestricted access for recreation. She alleged this would have negative impacts on the local ranching industry, farming industry, and recreational vehicle (RV) industry. She stated the existing Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA in the area under discussion in the Lands Bill already had seven established wilderness areas within its borders. She said these 1.2 million acres, which comprised the largest NCA in the contiguous 48 states, would be expanded into additional wilderness and NCAs, taking away another almost one million acres for multi-use public access from the Gerlach and Vya areas. She contended these areas had been heavily recreated and ranched since the 1920s, and as such were not in the pristine, untouched state that was required under the Wilderness Act. She mentioned the increasing number of seniors and veterans in the area, many of whom relied on wheeled transport to continue to go into the areas they

had enjoyed for years. Ms. Ambrose emphasized the importance of preserving access for these citizens. She reasoned there were plenty of pre-existing wilderness and NCAs already established in Northwest Washoe County without bringing future negative impacts to the local economy and financial hardship to ranchers in the area.

Mr. Bruce Foster, a Washoe County resident, remarked he did not come to the meeting with the intention of speaking on this issue but came across a video from *The Epoch Times* entitled “Exposing the Government’s Secret Plan to Grab 30 Percent of America’s Land.” He shared some themes from the video that stood out to him regarding control and felt thorough research and discussion on this legislation was needed prior to making a decision. He expressed concern about the increasing number of large apartment complexes in Washoe County and implored Commissioners to watch the video and other presentations from Margaret Byfield, Executive Director of American Stewards of Liberty.

Mr. Julien Pellegrini shared he was a fifth-generation Nevadan and was very dedicated to Nevada’s open space. He relayed he strongly preferred undeveloped land, though he recognized that growth and the degradation that came with it, were coming. He concluded that without further protection of Nevada’s wild places and vulnerable species, degradation would continue. He fervently requested the BCC support this Resolution.

Ms. Joni Hammond expressed her love of the abundance and proximity of BLM and US Forest Service (USFS) land available for recreation in Washoe County. She said she and her husband enjoyed the undeveloped land as-is and asked that the public land be kept public for all. She supposed many of the public lands, if this bill passed, would become restricted areas for particular interest groups. She remarked that the Lands Bill encompassed some of the last roadless areas of Washoe County, and she felt those areas needed to be guarded and protected, not subjected to building to and through them. She asked the Commissioners to please vote no.

Mr. John Eppolito, a 27-year Washoe County resident, reported he paid close attention to issues affecting housing in Lake Tahoe and in the region. He mentioned the “economic development” wording in the Lands Bill and spoke about the work of volunteers in Incline Village (IV) who spent almost two years on a committee and came up with a zoning plan that made a somewhat small section of town along State Route (SR) 28 employee housing and/or affordable housing. He noted that in a public meeting, a former member of the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA) said the buyer of a parcel within the employee housing zone made a mistake by buying it. Mr. Eppolito stated the buyer wanted to build \$2.5 to \$5 million condos. Mr. Eppolito claimed that somehow the buyer was able to get Chair Hill, who was on the TMRPA board, on his side. He believed that with the help of Chair Hill, the developer got the zoning changed by both the TMRPA and the BCC, contravening what the citizen volunteers spent two years working on. Chair Hill encouraged Mr. Eppolito to confine his comments to the item under discussion. Mr. Eppolito remarked that according to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), traffic was at maximum capacity in Kings Beach most days in July and August. He began to share opinions about the non-residents who made those decisions, and Chair Hill interjected again about relevance, which he said he was getting

to. He recalled that a Placer County Commissioner said there were now one million people within a one-hour drive of Lake Tahoe. He added that there were 12 large new projects on just the north and west shores of Tahoe in various stages of approval, which he reasoned would bring in tens of thousands more full-time residents just in those areas. He stated there had been no Tahoe Fire Evacuation Plan taking those projects into account in the local area, not to mention all the additional people the Lands Bill would bring into the region and Tahoe in the summer, which was fire season. He declared he was against overdevelopment in Reno and the region and was uncertain about the water supply.

Ms. Margaret Martini, an IV resident, suggested that Chair Hill's name was synonymous with out-of-control development. Ms. Martini asserted Chair Hill's position on this Commission and multiple other boards afforded her the latitude to fast-forward unleashed, unsound, and unsustainable development of the Tahoe Basin, and that now she had her eye on the BLM land in Washoe County. Ms. Martini said developers loved Chair Hill and the people who fought the daily traffic and worried about where the water was going to come from needed to stop her development agenda. Ms. Martini cited a meeting she attended in which Chair Hill stated, "Reno has no water worries" and pointed in the direction of Lake Tahoe. Ms. Martini informed Chair Hill that Tahoe water was not available to support her pro-development agenda, and expressed her belief that passage of this legislation would amplify the threat of further over-development. She also indicated concern about the inadequacy of fire evacuation roads for current residents, let alone additional development. She questioned whether Washoe County citizens would stand up or just allow further sprawl from development, and thought the Commissioners needed to be pro-citizens, not pro-development. She ended by recalling the precedence set with previous zoning changes from the BCC in favor of high-density-development, which she thought was a very real possibility for the future.

Mr. John Zimmerman from the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) informed the Commission that TMWA was neutral on this bill and was not asking for any land for future water facilities as part of it. He affirmed they were closely monitoring the bill and had worked with Senator Rosen's office to ensure there was no conflict between existing water facilities and the proposed lands involved.

Ms. Tracey Hilton-Thomas began with a quote from the Bible about harmony and said harmony was the right approach for the Lands Bill. She noted her attendance at the Spanish Springs CAB meeting where this proposal was presented and observed the only attendees who supported the proposal were the politicians. Several questions of concern were presented, as were several comments opposing the bill as it was currently written. She emphasized the high number of constituent concerns and suggested consultation of resources including the website www.americanstewards.us to learn more about those concerns. She indicated the Resolution being considered at the BCC meeting that day would have no impact on the Lands Bill, and that discussion was a waste of time and resources. She said the land in question currently belonged to the people, and as such was already protected. She claimed the Lands Bill would reduce the protection and could open opportunities for development that would not be in the best interest of Washoe County residents. She said while there were some good qualities and ideas in this bill, significant

work remained before it was even close to being ready for consideration. Among the many issues that she noted needed to be addressed, she highlighted concern about property transfer and ownership. She asked the Commissioners to vote no and allow further negotiations to proceed.

Ms. Julie Osburn, a Washoe County resident, began by offering all praise and glory to her god. She mentioned the protection against discrimination enshrined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She stated disability rights were civil rights, and the ADA included accommodations and protections for people with disabilities in many areas of public life, including voting and parking. She asserted a yes vote on this bill was a yes vote of discrimination against disabled Washoe County residents. She elaborated, saying that most people with disabilities used wheeled vehicles, and when a wilderness area was created, many people were unable to access the space. She cited an earlier commenter who claimed hunting would be unaffected, and Ms. Osburn disagreed with this claim, especially for persons with disabilities. She claimed wilderness areas were supposed to be roadless areas, but those proposed areas already had roads. She declared she was the twelfth commenter to oppose the bill, and of the six who spoke in support, the majority were from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or businesses that did not reside in Washoe County. She commented that the people who opposed the bill were residents of Washoe County. She emphasized the importance of having infrastructure in place before development and shared her experience living in Palamino Valley and observing construction in the area over the last five years, which she remarked was 20 years behind the development. She thought this item needed reconsideration and a vote of no.

Ms. Pam Darr shared that she was a precinct captain in District 4 and mentioned a video she sent to the Commissioners about the 30x30 conservation initiative. She was concerned about conservation and development and the possibility of someone taking control, resulting in a loss of individual safety and control. She stated the infrastructure in Spanish Springs was a mess, though she knew growth was going to come based on her experience living in Storey County. She remembered a tour she took of the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center (TRI Center) 20 years ago with Mr. Lance Gilman and her brother when he was a commissioner. She said every time she saw a lot get cleared, she cringed, because the infrastructure was not in place and the traffic was getting horrendous. Additionally, she expressed her love of the open space available now and declared her concern and opposition to that being removed to allow more development, especially for more dense apartments. She recalled people expressing similar opposition at a meeting a number of years ago and was uncomfortable with the urgency of the Resolution being pushed through now, especially given the lag that remained with existing growth and infrastructure.

Mr. Larry Johnson, President of the Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife (CNW), began by providing some personal background and thanking Washoe County staff for convening stakeholders a number of years ago to discuss and iron out the concept of what was now the Lands Bill. He contended there were many misconceptions stated that day, for example regarding land in northern Washoe County designated as wilderness study areas, which were managed by BLM and were, in his words, quasi-wilderness. He spoke

about the work that had gone into convening all interest groups, including ranchers, miners, off-road, tribes, sportsmen, and wilderness advocates to try to work out what would be the best use for everybody. He acknowledged that no one interest group got entirely what they wanted, but there was a compromise, and that was what this bill represented. He advised that because final plans, maps, and wording had not yet been seen, CNW reserved its final comments until such time as they were published and reviewed, but he felt the process should go forward. He noted the hard work that went into ensuring existing access was retained in any special designated areas, and all existing roads were kept open. He affirmed that CNW did not want to see new roads being built because that was not in the interest of wildlife. He reiterated the compromises contained in this bill and urged Commissioners to push it forward.

Mr. Mark Neumann expressed concern about the lack of finalized maps and shared the sentiment expressed by other commenters that voting on this item was preemptive with so many details currently unknown.

Mr. Hugh Ezzell stated the Resolution did make a difference, contrary to what some prior commenters alleged. He observed the lack of detail currently available and was opposed to the bill. He said the bill included over 700,000 acres for land preservation and conservation projects, but it was unclear what those projects were, and who would get to do the projects and be in control. He suggested there was some disparity between the people enacting the legislation and the people using the land. He claimed the remote recreational areas in Nevada were protected by the long driving distance required to get there. He recalled the Wilderness Act of the 1970s, and the resultant closing off of significant portions of Nevada land, despite much of the land not qualifying as wilderness due to existing roads. He opined that not much of the land in Nevada qualified as a wilderness area. He emphasized the abundance of publicly owned land in Nevada, and the contrast with California and most other states, where more lands were privately owned. He noted the good stewardship of the land done by BLM. He urged Commissioners to oppose the Resolution.

Ms. Wendy Colborne, representing the Building and Construction Trades Council of Northern Nevada (BCTCNN), expressed strong support for the Lands Bill. She claimed it would encourage infill development, maximize utilization of existing infrastructure, and improve local infrastructure to address growth, including developments for transit, water storage, flood management, and more. She contended these investments in the community would offer long-term work for Nevada's building and construction trades, creating a stable future for Northern Nevada's workforce. She said that while BCTCNN did support the Lands Bill, she also wanted to note that large-scale projects like these must include worker protections, pay prevailing wages, and give back to the community through community benefits agreements. She asserted provisions like these ensured that apprentices were trained, workers were able to support their families, and job sites remained safe. She asked for Commissioner support of the Lands Bill alongside the aforementioned provisions to ensure the long-term health and economic stability of the region and its workers.

Mr. Roger Edwards, a 50-year resident of Washoe County, pointed out the proximity of his residence to dirt roads. He declared his strong opposition to any resolution with the federal government regarding open lands because the people always lost. He made an analogy to entering a card game with a professional card shark who had all the moves. He reasoned passage of this legislation would increase restrictions on the public in the proposed areas, which he opposed because they were public lands. He suggested an alternative resolution to remove government encroachers from public property. He said people were losing track of what public lands really were by definition and emphasized the importance of the lands remaining public.

Mr. George Lee, a Washoe County resident, began by referencing his understanding of the constitutionally defined purpose of the government, which he said was to protect the constitutionally guaranteed rights of the people. He held they were also supposed to keep the government from pulling a fast one on the people. He expressed his belief that property ownership by the government was a violation of that edict and that the government had no right to public lands. Using this rationale, he reasoned the BLM was an illegal organization, though he did not expect the BCC to support that position, and suggested the Commissioners were not doing their part to protect the people. He shared his concerns about fundraisers related to the election of Commissioners, and sources and use of funds more broadly. Mr. Lee declared the BCC should never allow anything to be built without assurance that appropriate infrastructure was supported, planned, and in motion. He provided examples of significant infrastructure lag in various local areas. He maintained resolutions do have an effect.

Mr. Doug Busselman, Executive Vice President of the Nevada Farm Bureau (NFB), imparted that many NFB members in northern Washoe County had expressed their concerns over the impacts this bill could have. He communicated part of the concern over the Resolution was the lack of specifics that could be in the bill when it was finalized. He explained that though they were involved in the process going back two bills ago, there were concerns over what the consequences would be, especially for the NCAs. Mr. Busselman claimed wilderness designation and management were much more fully understood than NCAs. NFB comments to Senator Rosen's office regarding the draft of this bill emphasized the importance of dealing with livestock grazing provisions and other uses appropriately and protecting their continuation as NCA use was more fully defined. NFB was concerned about actions being taken prior to knowing what the final language of the legislation would be. He believed the Resolution did not accurately reflect what land uses would be available once a designation was established. He restated his concern with the Resolution at this time because of the lack of detail and pledged the continuation of NFB involvement and member advocacy in this process.

Mr. Gary Butcher read a statement regarding the importance of mining and agriculture and claimed without these industries there would be no jobs and no economy. He expressed concern about the impact of the Lands Bill on these key industries and asserted society depended on the transformation of raw materials, mined or grown, by skilled workers into something useful or edible.

Ms. Valerie Tilson commented that she moved to the area in 1981. She shared recollections of the area at that less populated time and remembered people working together with one another and with the surrounding farmland. She had noticed the disappearance of publicly usable land and cautioned about the need for preservation of land as it became more limited.

Ms. Constance Howard, a 37-year resident of the Truckee Meadows, spoke in favor of passing the Resolution in support of the Lands Bill. She acknowledged that some details remained unknown and would continue to be worked out but did not feel that was grounds for stopping the process at this time. She indicated she had been following the bill very closely and thought Senator Rosen's staff and Washoe County staff worked diligently with a variety of stakeholders to generate a good compromise bill. She referenced the concerns mentioned by prior commenters about economic development and countered that people with those concerns should be in support of the bill because it had fantastic conservation values. She thought there were a lot of misconceptions about public lands, and asserted that with this bill, this land would stay public, with added protection for posterity. She emphasized that not passing bills like this would lead to development, and the amount of land set aside for potential development in the Lands Bill was very small compared to the almost 800,000 acres of various conservation designations. She said this bill also provided for some transfer to three tribes in Northern Nevada, which she felt was appropriate. She noted the complexity of public lands bills and provided assurance that this process was usual and expected. She reiterated that she felt this was a good bill, and urged Commissioners to support the Resolution so Senator Rosen and her staff could continue to move forward.

Ms. Debra Cockrell shared that she came from Northern California to speak on behalf of the community of Surprise Valley and ranchers of the area who would be affected by the Lands Bill. She detailed her involvement with this legislation for the last six years, including meetings with FNW, miners, recreationists, NFB, Senator Rosen's office, and Congressman Amodei's office in addition to letter writing. She said the community of Surprise Valley supported many multi-generational ranchers whose lives depended on the BLM ground in Nevada, which they used for grazing. She explained their community and economy were affected by people coming through to hunt and recreate who slept, ate, and bought fuel and groceries there. She stated her opposition to the development and the Resolution, and strongly felt there was not enough information available to proceed, though she noted she had pressured Senator Rosen's office to supply additional details. She urged the Commissioners to vote no.

Vice Chair Herman thanked the commenters and shared her historical and ongoing preference to avoid Lands Bills because of her perception of their disproportionately negative effects. She cited the 2004 Lincoln County Lands Bill as an example of results not living up to expectations, which she related to political uncertainty and the question of whether elected officials would uphold the vision of their predecessors. She indicated she would vote no and thought it would be more prudent to review details when they became available. She explained most Washoe County public lands were in the district she represented, District 5, and expressed concern that passage of the Lands Bill

would affect the economy of those areas unfavorably. She reiterated her intention to vote no and requested that the minutes of that day's meeting, including all the comments and discussion on this item, be sent to Senator Rosen's office.

Commissioner Andriola shared the time she had invested in discussions with representatives from the offices of Senator Rosen and Congressman Amodei, Washoe County staff, and many other stakeholders. She asserted these stakeholders would remain part of the process as it continued, and that Congressman Amodei in particular had been clear about his dedication to preserving the best interests of ranchers in the area. She noted his extensive experience with Lands Bills and the positive influence he could exert on this process. She indicated her support for moving forward with the Lands Bill.

Chair Hill expressed agreement with Commissioner Andriola about the careful monitoring being done by the offices of both Senator Rosen and Congressman Amodei to ensure all voices were heard. She felt the timing was right in the community for these intentional acts of conservation because of the rapid growth in the area and the number of stakeholders who had been engaged in the robust public process over several years. She thought it was prudent for the Board to move forward with the Resolution and stated she would be in support.

Commissioner Clark acknowledged the complexity and duration of the process. He relayed his pro-growth position but also indicated his support for area farmers and ranchers, tribes, and other individuals and organizations that spoke during the meeting. He expressed his keen interest in the details of the bill and felt the process needed to be slower, more methodical, and incremental over a period of 5 to 15 years. He questioned the administration of the Bill in the future and said he could not support passage of the Resolution at that time, though he wished he could.

Commissioner Garcia admitted that although she had heard about the length of the process, she was relatively new to it. She imparted that since the beginning of the BCC's discussion of this legislation in Spring 2023, she only had two constituents from her district contact her with concerns. She reported that she referred them to the www.landsbill.org website and/or other resources and that their concerns were addressed. She shared details about her own information-gathering process and the groups she considered as she was forming her opinion. She expressed enthusiasm about a number of civic funding provisions in the bill and said she supported the Resolution.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 3-2 vote with Vice Chair Herman and Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 15 be approved and requested. The Resolution for same is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

3:59 p.m. **The Board recessed.**

4:30 p.m. **The Board reconvened with all members present.**

23-0627 **AGENDA ITEM 16** Second reading and adoption of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 5 - Administration and Personnel to add a new section titled "Regulation of Lobbyists", establishing for purposes of the ordinance a definition for "lobbyist", "communication", "policymaker" and "family member", requiring lobbyists to make certain disclosures when providing public comment at a public meeting of the Board of County Commissioners, and establishing civil penalties for any person who knowingly violates the provisions of the section. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Deputy County Clerk Lauren Morris read the title for Ordinance No. 1707, Bill No. 1898.

Chair Hill invited Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich to summarize the work and changes to the Ordinance language since the last reading. Ms. Matijevich began by sharing the timeline of this item, which began in April 2023 and came before the Board in May. At the meeting in May, staff was directed to prepare an Ordinance for consideration that was modeled after a similar ordinance in place in the City of Reno. She mentioned the discussion that took place at the end of August 2023 and the resultant request for changes to specific provisions, which were incorporated prior to the second reading. Additional discussions and requests took place, specifically regarding the removal of the requirement for paid lobbyists to register with the Office of the County Manager (OCM) and wear an identification badge. Additionally, the potential for criminal penalties was removed, and limited to just civil penalties. Those additional revisions were incorporated into the version being presented that day.

Commissioner Clark questioned the purpose and need for the Ordinance under discussion. He expressed concern about burdening OCM with additional tasks unnecessarily. He said he did not support this Ordinance.

Vice Chair Herman indicated she would also be voting no on this item.

Commissioner Garcia shared she felt neutral about this item, but did think it would support transparency, which she had often heard as a constituent concern. She said she preferred the August 2023 version, and thanked Ms. Matijevich for her work on it. She added how helpful it would be for her as a Commissioner to be able to clearly identify who the lobbyists were, regardless of where they were from or how well they might be known by some Commissioners. She did not think the revised version preserved transparency as well as the prior version and was saddened to have seen it pared down in this way.

Chair Hill echoed she also liked the Ordinance as presented in August 2023, and the benefits it would have provided to the public, who might not be aware of paid affiliations held by some commenters at meetings. She acknowledged she felt this version would still improve transparency and disclosure documented on the public record.

Commissioner Clark mentioned the lack of historical precedent for the requirements of this Ordinance, though he did sympathize with Commissioner Garcia's observations about transparency. He remarked the power to make comments was not equivalent to the power to influence, regardless of whether or not an individual was paid. He supported people declaring who they were but did not think another layer of government was advisable.

Commissioner Andriola echoed Commissioner Garcia's concern regarding the lack of clarity and transparency about paid commenter affiliations. She thought Commissioner Clark's suggestion to include a checkbox on public comment cards would help towards having such affiliations declared on the record. She questioned the likely fiscal impact of the original version of the Ordinance, which required badges, and supposed the version presented that day was a less costly solution in terms of both materials and staff time. She thanked everyone for the work that went into each version of the Ordinance.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Valerie Fiannaca stated she did not initially agree with this Ordinance but thought it might be good to include the identification of political operatives. She cited a recent interaction with a political operative that she found contrary to transparency goals. She shared she would comply with this Ordinance as a lobbyist when someone could supply proof of a paycheck, and not before.

Mr. Scott Finley displayed documents, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He disclosed he was a Washoe County resident with a military background in the financial management and comptroller career field of the US Air Force (USAF). He remarked it was quite obvious that the idea behind this Ordinance was nothing more than a poorly thought-out power grab. He asserted the Board must reject this Ordinance. He claimed the intent was to pass a bare-bones Ordinance and gradually amend it over time. He asserted the Board intended to amend the definition of policymaker in the future to extend far beyond County Commissioners. He maintained that despite the Ordinance being gutted into something minimal and seemingly innocuous, it remained unworkable. He said the Board treated its constituents like some sort of enemy who would remain so until loyalty had been proven. He questioned the inconsistency between expectations for public commenters in-person and digitally, and how lobbyists would be identified when submitting comments through the SpeakUp platform. He noted people could choose not to identify themselves as lobbyists, and pondered what the consequences might be for those who opted not to identify themselves. He asked the Board to reject the Ordinance in all its forms.

Ms. Janet Butcher asserted she was not a lobbyist, although she claimed some uncertainty upon reading through the definition of the term because of the word "communicate," which she did. She recalled her earlier comments about transparency and elaborated on her feeling that transparency should also come from the dais. She used the September 26, 2023, Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting, where she felt detail should have been provided about why the meeting was cancelled, as an example. She acknowledged there probably were some lobbyists in attendance at the meeting but thought people could decipher who among them was paid. Ms. Butcher reported one of the reasons

she started coming to speak at meetings was to deny association with a group because of a piece of paper that went around the County with her name on it and an organization attached to her. Although she did not deny potential association with that organization, she expressed she was affiliated with a lot of organizations and proceeded to list some examples. She remarked that although she thought the Ordinance was frivolous, a provision like this might have increased transparency regarding some commenters at prior meetings.

Ms. Debbi Sauk recalled statements from the prior week regarding lobbyists and how they were known to Commissioners. She stated lobbyists visited the offices of Commissioners to convince them and did not normally sit through hours of meetings to make their case. She mentioned individuals in attendance that day who did identify themselves as representing organizations and/or businesses and opined that if identification of some kind was to be required, the proposed checkbox on the public comment card would suffice.

Mr. Bruce Parks disclosed he was the chairman of the Washoe County Republican Party, and declared he was ecstatic to see the Ordinance come forward. He proceeded to share his perspective on the origin of the Ordinance, which he asserted was developed in response to people who were bussed in from California to comment on a contentious agenda item. He emphasized it was important to him that Commissioners understood what the community was concerned about and thought this Ordinance would improve awareness of individual motivations for civic participation.

Ms. Penny Brock commented that she saw this as a First Amendment issue that arose in response to increased meeting participation by individuals. She felt the Ordinance was an attempt to put up a barrier and silence people. She questioned why Commissioners would sit on the dais if not to listen to and serve the people they were elected to represent. She suspected the Ordinance would be amended over time, though she could not predict how specifically. She reminded Commissioners they would be up for re-election next year and held accountable by their constituents.

Ms. Pam Darr recalled circumstances where lobbyists identified themselves of their own accord. She asserted her belief that lobbyists were easily identified already, without the need for this Ordinance.

Ms. Victoria Myer remarked about meetings earlier in 2023 with significant attendance and public comment. She also mentioned the vote being postponed on Vice Chair Herman's election integrity resolution. She discussed the number of California license plates she observed in the parking lot after the meeting in March 2023, which she took pictures of. She thought the Ordinance would be great for transparency and accountability, so it would be known who was being paid by whom for their attendance and/or commentary. She declared she was not paid and had never been paid for her comments, and that the Ordinance was probably a bad idea overall because it was a soft version. She thought work would continue to silence people.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 3-2 vote with Vice Chair Herman and Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Ordinance No. 1707 be adopted, approved, and published in accordance with NRS 244.100.

23-0628 **AGENDA ITEM 17** Public Comment.

Ms. Katie Knepper displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She noted she and Mr. Alferd Knepper previously spoke about the Safe Embrace special use permit (SUP) appeal to be heard at the October 24, 2023, Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting. She explained specific findings must be met prior to the approval of a SUP, otherwise, it could not be approved. She defined one of the findings, improvements, which included adequate utilities, roadway improvements, sanitation, and water supply. She opined Ponderosa Drive did not have acceptable roadway improvements, and stated that during the August 3, 2023, Board of Adjustment (BOA) meeting, Chair Rob Pierce commented on the horrible condition of the road after asphalt grindings had been spread on it. Ms. Knepper acknowledged the asphalt grindings were not a permanent solution. She reported Washoe County could not maintain the road, since it was a private drive, and there were no sidewalks available on Ponderosa Drive to accommodate pedestrian traffic, despite there being a considerable amount. She affirmed there was a danger to the residents of the area as well as to the residents of Safe Embrace due to the increased traffic. She asserted the quality of the road and the lack of sidewalks were necessary significant roadway improvements, and on this alone, the SUP must be denied. She informed the next finding was site suitability. She quoted the response from Safe Embrace stating the care facility existed for 20 years, and the site was previously approved and operated under the City of Sparks before it was determined the permitting should have been completed under Washoe County. She declared none of that was true and revealed the care facility had not existed for over 20 years, as it was permitted by the City of Sparks in direct violation of its code in 2019 and overturned by a court order in 2022. Ms. Knepper divulged the site was not suitable for a group care facility with three dwelling units on a one-acre low-density suburban (LDS) lot zoned for one dwelling unit per acre, including what amounted to be a commercial kennel, which required 2.5 acres. She stated the SUP was requesting to convert a group home with up to 10 occupants into a group care facility with 18 to 25 occupants and 4 to 5 caretakers during the day. She cited BOA Member Kathie Julian's statement pointing out that the proposed use was similar to a tier 3 short-term rental (STR) of 21 or more occupants, which was considered inappropriate for a location in a residential regulatory zone, and, because the site was not suitable, the SUP must be denied. She referenced the photograph taken in front of the Safe Embrace property showing the road with the asphalt grindings along with a copy of the STR definitions.

Mr. Alferd Knepper was called to speak. Due to an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation, Ms. Knepper was permitted to read Mr. Knepper's statement on his behalf. Ms. Knepper displayed photographs that were placed on file with the Clerk. She provided the finding requiring that issuance of a permit might not be significantly detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare; have an adverse impact on adjacent properties; or be damaging to the character of the surrounding area. She quoted

Safe Embrace's response to the finding indicating that "the site location provides a discreet, safe, and appropriate location for Safe Embrace's services." She reported on Safe Embrace Executive Director Afshan West's response to public safety concerns during a televised interview, during which she expressed discontentment regarding the release of the shelter's address on public records. Ms. Knepper noted there was unease related to potential violent interactions with the abusers and mentioned the property was 300 feet from Agnes Risley Elementary School and Sparks Middle School. She indicated there had been police action in the neighborhood, and the safety was compounded for residents of the area due to Ponderosa Drive being a dead-end road. She declared safety concerns were the reason a shelter for victims of domestic violence was not allowed in any residential area in the City of Sparks per code. She and the other residents hoped the Board agreed they were not second-class citizens, and she added there were appropriate locations for shelters, even though Safe Embrace refused to pursue those avenues. Ms. Knepper questioned how anyone would think constructing a commercial group care facility in the middle of a subdivision of single-family estate homes on one-acre lots would not be detrimental to the character of the surrounding area and read aloud the features of the SUP. She referenced the photographs depicting Safe Embrace when operating as a group care facility.

Ms. Valerie Fiannaca pointed out that Ms. Knepper and Mr. Knepper had waited seven hours to deliver public comment because of the decision to remove the public comment period from the beginning of the meeting, which she stated was a matter Commissioner Clark had suggested placing on the agenda several times. She believed it was a disservice to the community. She compared Chair Hill's treatment of Commissioner Clark to Washoe County School District (WCSD) Board of Trustees President Elizabeth Smith's treatment of WCSD Board of Trustees Member Jeff Church. She declared none of the public's words or work at BCC meetings had any meaning until the elections were cleaned up and asserted the County was one Commissioner away from having election integrity. Ms. Fiannaca alleged those who opposed having election integrity did so for a reason, which she indicated was quite obvious to everyone in attendance.

Mr. Bruce Parks introduced himself as a Washoe County taxpayer and stated it was a conflict of interest to vote for monies for an organization when sitting on the board for it regardless of whether personal pecuniary funding was received. He opined the solution to the unhoused population problem was to enforce the law and emphasized that \$126,000 was expended on every unhoused resident in the County. He referenced Commissioner Clark's comment about the County running out of soup for the elderly every day in the community centers and urged the Board to fix that; however, he alleged the Board would not do so due to the profit associated with maintaining the unhoused population. He thanked Commissioner Garcia for mentioning the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic during Item 4 and declared everyone knew the pandemic was orchestrated and perpetuated on the American people to violate their rights and force them to comply with things they did not wish to. He asserted no one would go to jail for it. Mr. Parks expressed disappointment over the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) remaining unbalanced and divulged he had been fighting to protect the innocence of the community's children since 2019. He indicated the Board set back his effort by a minimum of four years and alleged the Board perpetuated the problems that originated from the LBT. He opined that the

Ordinance referenced in Item 16 would have an adverse effect on the Commissioners who voted in favor of it.

Mr. Scott Finley provided documents that were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He introduced himself as a Washoe County resident with a military background in the financial management and comptroller career field of the United States Air Force (USAF). He claimed global climate change was not a problem. He declared carbon dioxide was pre-emptively labeled as a pollutant, which was a result of computer models that were programmed to make predictions that failed regularly, and he deduced the matter detracted from verifiable and well-documented pollutants. He claimed government policy would likely prioritize reducing pollution from carbon dioxide over pollution from toxic compounds. He informed that, unlike carbon dioxide, such heavy metals and compounds as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) were toxic to virtually all life forms on Earth. He asserted people could not know for sure that a warmer Earth would be problematic due to the complexity of the Earth's micro-climates and noted change was certain and often uncontrollable. Mr. Finley pointed out water vapor was a greenhouse gas similar to carbon dioxide. He stated a percentage of tapped new water evaporated into the atmosphere and mentioned combustion engines always used carbon dioxide and water. He thought the most pressing environmental problem was the unknown in general. He explained that because there were too many variables to conclude what the source of global climate change was or whether it was truly a dilemma, it would be best to focus on what was known and what practices were most healthy and optimal for cultivating life and adapting. He recognized climate change was a national security matter and indicated those matters fell outside the Board's purview. He suggested alleviating such issues as the high levels of PFAS found in Swan Lake instead of passing policies designed to offset carbon emissions in an effort to mitigate climate change.

Ms. Janet Butcher displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She indicated she was still not a lobbyist and still represented herself. She mentioned United States (US) Senator Jacky Rosen did not include all the information on her website and stated the public was not afforded transparency from politicians. She noted the public comment period was still not added to the beginning of the agenda, despite requests from Commissioner Clark and Vice Chair Herman. She echoed Ms. Valerie Fiannaca's comment regarding Mr. Knepper and Ms. Knepper having to wait to speak. She thanked Vice Chair Herman for asking for a show of hands and indicated she had started gathering signatures. Ms. Butcher wished Chair Hill would return the first public comment period to the beginning of the meeting or place the requested item on an agenda to vote on the matter. She observed certain people were gavelled down while others were not. She pointed out that Sunday, September 17, 2023, was Constitution Day and mentioned having asked for the day to be honored for the past two years. She acknowledged former Commissioner Kitty Jung honored it on her behalf.

Ms. Sandra Burnell was not present when called to speak.

Ms. Reva Crump proclaimed the Board had a meeting problem and remarked on the length of the meeting. She understood the first public comment period was removed in order to shorten the length of the meetings and noted the effort resulted in them becoming longer. She suggested adding public comment back to the beginning of the meeting to mitigate the issue and speculated the frequency of the BCC meetings resulted in the length of the meetings rather than the public, as 25 percent of the 2023 meetings were effectively cancelled.

Ms. Teresa Bacon accused Washoe County of victim-blaming her through the use of tweets in order to shame her and her character without an investigation. She referenced a tweet, dated September 15, 2023, indicating the County would work on her behalf. She claimed to have received threats of removal from the Nevada Cares Campus on numerous occasions after providing testimony during the September 11, 2023, Community Homelessness Advisory Board (CHAB) meeting. She alleged Nevada Cares Campus Director Scott Benton threatened her because she was crying about the program staff barring an 80-year-old woman from entering for 24 hours. She stated Mr. Benton warned her she would be removed for disrespecting him during an incident in which she expressed fear of his behavior. Ms. Bacon described the strategy called “cutting off the head of the snake” and noted poor leadership was closely guarded. She asserted there was a snake in the community who was voluntarily and involuntarily let in by some individuals in attendance. She implored County Manager Eric Brown and Chair Hill to resign so the positions could be reserved for those who were willing to work for the people.

Ms. Penny Brock recalled the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) discussed purchasing two hydrogen buses during the previous BCC meeting and noted the cost was not mentioned. RTC had also stated Washoe County was leading the nation in this effort. She informed the cost of the buses was astounding and believed the Commissioners should be asking about it. She reported a gallon of hydrogen fuel was \$16 during the previous year. She recalled the RTC was currently saying the electric buses were not working because they had to be recharged so often, and she scrutinized the RTC for spending the County’s tax money on buses that did not work. She proposed halting the order and communicated the public’s need for answers. She pointed out the hydrogen fuel would require transportation from Northern California and questioned the additional expense. She inquired about the return on investment (ROI) and if the fuel buses were sold. She suggested using gas-powered or diesel-powered buses again. Ms. Brock reported the County expended \$1.12 million during the previous year to fix two roads in the Buring Man (BM) location and asked if the County would need to pay for road repairs there again. She mentioned children were at the event for the first time and wondered if child trafficking was occurring there.

Ms. Nichelle Hull referenced a remark made by Commissioner Garcia at the beginning of the meeting about respecting the preferences of diverse communities in regard to the content in Washoe County’s libraries. Ms. Hull asserted any material approved or preferred by the LGBTQIA+ community was recommended for and agreeable to all groups, which she believed was irresponsible. She stated a group of people might want to introduce material to children that was not acceptable to all library users, and she

expressed that materials may not work for all groups of individuals. She commented in opposition to allowing sexually explicit books in libraries that she alleged were written to and marketed toward children and reported that as of September 2023, Alabama joined Montana, Missouri, and Texas in correcting a trend of grooming children in the US libraries. She asserted grooming was happening partially through the repeated exposure of sexually obscene material. She informed that Alabama Governor Kay Ivey began asking Alabama Public Library Service Director Dr. Nancy Pack to dispose of the obscenity in the Alabama libraries, and nine other states were currently reforming their libraries.

Ms. Pam Darr introduced herself as a resident in precinct 6411 and indicated she had lived in the area since 1987. She mentioned there was graffiti near the firehouse off Disc Drive and Vista Boulevard. She detailed her experience with filling out an online police report on the matter, noting she was directed to provide her personal information, which she disagreed with because she was trying to perform her civic duty. She stated the Sparks City Council should be aware of and address these matters quickly so people would not be deterred from bringing awareness to a problem. She explained she mentioned the matter during a Sparks City Council meeting, and she was grateful to have had the ability to speak at the beginning of the meeting, which was beneficial to the Council and herself. She was also informed of a software application (app) after leaving the meeting that allowed her to photograph the graffiti for a report to law enforcement, and the graffiti was cleaned off approximately two days later. She commented that the Board was denying the public that ability and said she would have been in trouble if she was diabetic due to how little food she had to eat. Ms. Darr described attending another Sparks City Council meeting to notify the Councilmembers about the rapid theft occurring at stores in the area. When an incident of theft happened again a couple of weeks later, she sent it to the Councilmembers, which resulted in one of them monitoring the Nextdoor app, increasing patrols, and taking care of the situation. She expressed frustration over waiting so long to deliver comments about matters that were important to the community and said she was in favor of allowing general public comment at the beginning of BCC meetings.

Mr. Mark Neumann informed he fulfilled the temporary term with the Senior Services Advisory Board (SSAB) and was currently prepared to fill the next full-term position. He said he had fought for the community's seniors and attended all the SSAB meetings and luncheons with Commissioner Clark. He divulged the lack of activities after the C19 pandemic was a major concern for many senior residents, and Washoe County's senior citizens were currently provided one activity a month. He stated he worked hard in the effort to persuade the Sun Valley Swimming Pool to operate on Tuesdays and Thursdays so the senior citizens could spend an hour a day for two days a week swimming. He reported having heard some disturbing accounts during the previous SSAB meeting, including that some of the seniors at the Cares Campus were visiting the Washoe County Senior Center because it was safe, and other citizens were being bused there because they were not wanted at the Cares Campus. He advised investigating the matter. Mr. Neumann spoke in favor of providing a public comment period at the beginning of the meeting, noted the consequential length of the meetings, and pointed out every meeting he was present at throughout the County and the State offered public comment at the beginning. He said he had other activities he would have liked to do.

Ms. Tracey Hilton-Thomas referenced Ms. Janet Butcher's comment and indicated Ms. Butcher was her sister under God. She recognized the importance of point of order when used appropriately and stated she never saw it used as a weapon in her 23 years of experience with Washoe County as it was by Chair Hill. She expressed disagreement with using point of order to censor opposing opinions and when the Chair did not comprehend the subject of the agenda item. She asserted she was constantly gavelled down when attempting to discuss the budget that was in progress to pay for the transportation for training non-County employees because Chair Hill misread the item. Ms. Hilton-Thomas observed that point of order was not applied equally and said that public commenters tried to express their concerns regarding the individuals appointed to the LBT because the library programs were included in its scope of authorization. She indicated Commissioner Clark's statements about public comment were becoming pointless when he could speak after the Commissioners voted on items. She stated the point of offering public comment at the beginning of the meeting was so people could provide input and information for the benefit of the Commissioners' decisions. She requested placing an item on the agenda regarding the election resolution, discussion of parallel hand counts, and the release of election data before the last ballot was passed.

Ms. Victoria Myer addressed Commissioner Clark's requests for an agenda item concerning the initial public comment period. She wondered why the Board would want to continue staying at the meetings all day and mentioned the members of the public who attended the meetings were also tired. She commented that many matters could be communicated during the beginning of the meeting. She asked Chair Hill to place the matter on an agenda. She recalled being unable to finish her points due to being interrupted during Item 14. Referencing Item 14, she noted Ms. Ann Silver was not discussed, and there were 770 signatures from members of the public who wanted specific candidates on the LBT to balance the board. She alleged conduct by Library Director Jeff Scott against her and her husband had taken place and claimed a drag queen story hour (DQSH) patron had pushed a woman. Ms. Myer purported the Board elected more trustees to the LBT who would not be doing the right thing. She indicated she and other members of the public were watching for the upcoming election.

Mr. Fred Myer spoke in support of Commissioner Clark and his continued requests to vote on moving the public comment period to the beginning of the meeting. He wondered why everyone participating in the BCC meetings would want to endure the lengthy meetings. He recalled a discussion he was involved in with Commissioner Andriola. He expressed frustration over the Board not respecting or listening to members of the public and remarked that the BCC did not seem to be paying attention to the public commenters. He asserted Commissioner Clark was treated poorly by the Board and believed he was trying to do the right thing for the public. He expressed appreciation for Commissioner Clark. He speculated there was something else going on involving the Board and assured that he and other members of the public would not cease participation in the meetings.

Deputy County Clerk Lauren Morris advised the Board she received emailed public comments which were placed on file.

23-0629 **AGENDA ITEM 18** Announcements/Reports.

Vice Chair Herman requested two public comment sessions at every meeting in the future.

Commissioner Clark reiterated his request from the beginning of the meeting to have an investigation into Ms. Teresa Bacon’s allegations about her treatment at the Cares Campus. He echoed Vice Chair Herman’s preference to have public comment return to the start of meetings. He wanted it on an agenda for a vote. He also expressed a desire to revisit the rules governing chairmanship. He voiced support for evening meetings.

Commissioner Clark questioned protocol concerning a potential donation of approximately 200 used DVDs from Mr. Mark Neumann to the Senior Center. Chief Deputy District Attorney (Chief DDA) Mary Kandarar advised it was the policy of the Board to accept all donations, subsequent to a vote. Commissioner Clark requested it be agendized so it could be voted on. He voiced appreciation for Mr. Neumann’s additional efforts to support seniors, for example by offering free swim for seniors at a County pool on hot days during the summer. He declared soup needed to be on hand in the Senior Center and suggested reaching out to the vendor to bring more on the occasions when it ran out. He mentioned he would like to see additional help for seniors on a future agenda, particularly a revisitation of the meal options at the Senior Center which he felt were currently too limited.

* * * * *

5:54 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:
Heather Gage, Deputy County Clerk
Danielle Howard, Deputy County Clerk*