

Draft MINUTES
Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission
April 23, 2025

The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission met in a scheduled session on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at the Bartley Ranch Regional Park Brick House, 6000 Bartley Ranch Rd, Reno, NV 89511.

The meeting can be replayed on Washoe Channel at: https://washoe-nv.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=6&clip_id=4723

Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Kevin Joell, Sean Hill, Timothy Dake, Neal Jones, Tracy Kuczenski, Miles Gurtler

Absent: Mark Neumann, Lisa Rode

Staff Present: Brandon Roman, Brandon Roman, Jennifer Hoekstra, Eric Crump, Samantha Turner, Stephanie D’Arcy, Aaron Smith, Lindsay Liddell

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Public Comment

No public comment.

4. Approval of the Draft Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 26, 2025

Commissioner Kuczenski stated corrections need to be made on page 3 for punctuation and spelling. On page 4, more clarity is needed on what “type 2” is referring to, the word “people” should be omitted, and clarity is needed on whether the project or project funds would be coming to Washoe County. On page 6, missing

information on whether the leagues have been contacted, and clarity is needed in the reference to the flood to include the date of the flood. Page 12 should have a tense change from “was zones” to “was zoned”.

Request by Commissioner Joell to add page numbers to future minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Joell to approve the minutes with corrections. Seconded by Commissioner Dake.

No public comment.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Introduction and discussion on the nature and history of the Bartley Ranch property.

Bryan Harrower, South Park District Manager, gave a presentation on Bartley Ranch.

6. Presentation and discussion on Community Services Department Budget related to Parks and Open Space, including but not limited to, operating budgets, staffing, organizational and financial structure.

Eric Crump, Director of Community Services Department, stated there is a yearly budget presentation and workshop, which gives a good overview of Park’s budget and how it is structured. Washoe County is required to submit their budget to the State by May 30th.

In response to Commissioner Hill’s question regarding how the budget is worked on and presented, Mr. Crump stated they begin working in September. Mr. Crump introduced Samantha Turner, Division Director of Finance, and Jennifer Hoekstra, Fiscal Compliance Officer. Washoe County does not do zero base budgeting and starts with the budget the department had last year, a need for more is considered an above base request. The department will know what they’re starting with and work with the County Manager’s office and analysts through the process and will see what to prepare for. The County Manager makes a budget recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners who will decide.

In response to Chair Jones’ question regarding inflation, Mr. Crump stated that inflation has been a big topic the last couple of years within CSD, and CSD has

several service contracts that can be influenced by inflation, and will often have to make a justification for above base requests to keep those same service levels, inflations is not built into the budget.

In response to the question regarding COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) increases, Mr. Crump stated that salaries and wages are a large part of the County budget. COLA increases are typically known when budgets are put together and will be added in, if the increase amount has not been determined, they will try to identify what it might be knowing it may change later.

Eric Crump, Director of Community Services Department, Stephanie D'Arcy, Park Operations Superintendent, and Aaron Smith, Director of Operations gave the presentation.

In response to Commissioner Hill's question regarding the general fund, Mr. Crump stated the County has several different funds and the general fund is the largest with roughly \$546 million.

In response to Commissioner Gurtler's question regarding the Shooting Range, Mr. Crump stated that the Shooting Range is operated under a contract but is not considered a special fund.

Chair Jones thanked the Directors and Superintendent for their presentation and stated that he agrees parks are important for the mental health and well being of all residents in Washoe County and that it is important to maintain them as well as we can.

In response to Commissioner Joell's suggestion for the donation website to include specific Parks and projects, Aaron Smith, Director of Operations – CSD, stated that there are selections to donate to a specific park, trails or trees, etc. Park Staff can give the QR code to anyone who is interested in donating but does not solicit donations. Samantha Turner, Division Director of Finance, stated the donations are earmarked to ensure they go where the donor wants. Eric Crump, Director of Community Service Department, stated that all donations have to be accepted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Joell cautioned that QR codes will need to be checked routinely by staff to ensure it is correct as there is a common scam of people making their own QR codes and placing the sticker over the valid code.

In response to Chair Jones' question regarding a Public Service Announcement being done, Mr. Smith stated that Washoe County has a great Communications Team who work with regional media companies as well as their own social media and that will be part of the plan to roll the donation page out to the public.

In response to Chair Jones' question regarding the contract with the Wilbur D May Foundation not being updated since 1983, Mr. Crump stated the agreement has existed for a long time and the Foundation assists in the development of the Arboretum and Museum. The agreement with the foundation is that they are to provide a certain amount annually, which they meet and go above. The Foundation donates an extra \$100,000 annually to the Museum for the exhibit, and fund various improvements to the Arboretum and Museum so there is no need to renegotiate the contract.

In response to Commissioner Hill's question regarding special event fees and conveying Park needs to the Board of County Commissioners, Eric Crump stated that staff is still working on bringing a special event policy to Park Commission and will continue to make recommendations. Special events are 12% of revenue and the fees go into the general county fund and not back to Parks.

In response to Commissioner Joell's question regarding moving money around for efficiency and projects being done by employees or adding new employees, Mr. Crump stated that with any project, it is determined if it can be delivered in house and for smaller projects, often Park is able to collaborate with other divisions within CSD. Capital projects are usually not able to be done in house. Fees for new employees do not come off the books as a project would when completed.

In response to Commissioner Gurtler's question regarding updates on the Park District, Mr. Crump stated that the City of Reno has a proposal from a consultant to develop a service plan and Washoe County will cost share with the City of Reno to deliver the service plan. Park advocates are in conversation with the City of Sparks as they have not yet made a commitment.

In response to Commissioner Kuczenski's question regarding residential construction tax, Mr. Crump stated residential construction tax lives in NRS 278.4983 and state law would need to be changed to make changes to it. The statute was originally very strict to be used only for new construction but was changed within recent years to allow for replacement of existing, but the money cannot be used for operations. A current example of residential construction tax being used is for a portion of the development at South Valleys Regional Park.

In response to Commissioner Kuczenski's question regarding how capital projects are identified and the approval process, Aaron Smith stated they listen to the staff and supervisors, collect information and talk about needs, justification and solutions and submit the form to the CIP Committee. Eric Crump, who sits on the CIP Committee, stated that there are assessments done and funding in general fund and in grant funding/residential construction tax. Projects that can't be done with grant or tax money will compete for money from the general fund.

Deputy District Attorney, Lindsay Liddell, added that there is a pending bill, SB303, that has passed the senate that is attempting to significantly limit recreational use immunity from community parks which is something their office is looking into.

In response to Commissioner Dake's question regarding the reopening of Davis Creek, Stephanie D'Arcy stated that is a long process going through insurance. Unfortunately, the power infrastructure was destroyed, and the park cannot open without it, so they are working hard to get that done. Demolition and clean up started on May 5th so it is slowly progressing. Eric Crump added that it is now a capital project.

In response to Commissioner Dake's question about where the fire went, Mr. Crump stated it went north and did unfortunately burn the residence, pump house and power, but the campground was unaffected, the park just needs electricity and water.

In response to Commissioner Joell's question regarding the residential construction tax and if it is negotiable, Mr. Crump stated that whatever is built with the residential construction tax needs to serve that neighborhood. There are park districts within the County Code based on NRS, there is an action item in the Parks Regional Plan that recommends consolidating Park Districts. The limiting factor is the County Code and the sub districts. Code changes are doable at Commission level and County Code is amended by Board action. Deputy DA Liddell stated that residential construction tax is in Chapter 20 of the County Code.

7. Commissioner Request for future agenda items: (This item limited to announcements or topics/issues proposed for future workshops/agendas.) No discussion amongst Commissioners may occur during this item.

No requests.

8. Public Comments

No public comment.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:07pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Roebuck, Office Specialist

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