

Draft MINUTES
Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission
March 26, 2025

The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission met in a scheduled session on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, in the Washoe County Commission Chambers, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada.

The meeting was televised live and replayed on Washoe Channel at: <https://www.washoecounty.us/mgrsoff/Communications/wctv-live.php> also on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/WashoeCountyTV>

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

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Kevin Joell, Timothy Dake, Mark Neumann, Neal Jones, Nicholas-Martin Kearney, Tracy Kuczenski,

Absent: Miles Gurtler, Lisa Rode and Sean Hill

Staff Present: Brandon Roman, Stephanie D'Arcy, Aaron Smith, Lindsay Liddell, Eric Crump

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited by Commissioner Neumann

3. Reading of Zoom Instructions

Brandon Roman read the Zoom instructions.

4. Public Comment

No public comment.

5. Approval of the Draft Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 22, 2025

Motion by Commissioner Neumann to approve the minutes with correction to a missing word in item 7. Seconded by Commissioner Dake.

No public comment.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Acknowledgment and staff recognition of Braden Franklin, Horticulture Assistant, for 20 years of dedicated service and exceptional commitment to Washoe County.

Stephanie D'Arcy, Park Operations Superintendent, read the acknowledgement.

7. Eagle Scout Presentation – Bee Hotel Project at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park completed by Joseph Hawkins

Park Ranger Lauren Hay introduced Eagle Scout Joseph Hawkins, who gave a presentation on his project.

Chair Duke thanked Joseph for his presentation.

8. Joint presentation between Washoe County Staff and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office regarding Real-Time Crime Center partnership and security cameras.

Stephanie D'Arcy, Park Operations Superintendent, gave a background on the partnership and introduced Lieutenant Joshua Jenkins from Washoe County Sheriff's Office, who gave the presentation.

In response to Commissioner Duke's question regarding whether the cameras will run at night and during special events, Lieutenant Jenkins stated it is any time and any place. Big events will draw more activity meaning more potential victims. Lieutenant Jenkins also stated that in 2023, Dragon Lights, for example, had approximately eight vehicle burglaries, and in 2024 with cameras up, there was only one report.

In response to Commissioner Duke's question whether the cameras will be accessible to the public similar to NDOT cameras on the highway, Lieutenant Jenkins said they are not, if something criminal is caught on camera, it would become evidence, there are also partnerships with the Community and private organizations that do not want their feeds accessible to the public.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding the cameras put in at Gepford Park by Sun Valley GID and connecting with the GID, Lieutenant Jenkins stated they are partnered with Sun Valley GID and are aware of the ballpark cameras, but they do not encompass the whole park, and they are older. Commissioner Neumann stated the cameras were brand new and just installed last spring. Lieutenant Jenkins stated they will be installing cameras at Gepford Park as well.

In response to Chair Jones' question regarding the cameras assisting in an emergency evacuation, Lieutenant Jenkins stated they can, the development strategy focuses not just on crime prevention, but there are cameras placed on the map that are more inclined for fires, natural disasters, evacuations, etc. to give real time data and will be an asset to the community during a natural disaster,

Commissioner Joell stated he thinks the cameras are a fantastic idea and thanked Lieutenant Jenkins for bringing it forward. Chair Joell is familiar with Carson City Parks efforts to put cameras at many trail heads and staff has stated there has been a significant drop in vehicle burglaries and vandalism at the parks.

In response to Commissioner Kuczenski's question on what the cameras look like and if the public will be aware, Lieutenant Jenkins stated the cameras will be hard fixed and there will be a very big public announcement before the cameras are up and the system is live, The Sheriff has made notifying the public a priority. As to appearance, signage is still being worked out and there will be signage around the cameras, so the public is aware and for the deference effect. Current camera trailers are clearly marked by the Sheriff's Office and once they are placed in parks, the burglaries tend to stop in that park. The cameras themselves will not be large or an eyesore to the park.

9. Presentation, discussion, and possible recommendation to Board of County Commissioners to approve the following easement deeds between Washoe County (grantor) and NV Energy (grantee) to support the instillation of a gas main and gas regulator housing: a temporary construction easement for the gas main totaling ± 7.64 acres and a permanent public use easement for the gas regulator totaling $\pm 24,636$ square feet on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 554-010-01, part of Sierra Sage Course, for payment of appraised value, \$10,887, or improvements of equal value in lieu of payment; and authorize the Division Director of Operations to establish the terms of an easement agreement with NV Energy. For possible action.

Aaron Smith, Division Director of Operations, gave information on the Parkland Easement Policies and Procedures and gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding the 2200 feet of cart path, Mr. Smith stated it will not be asphalt and will be compacted type two. It is currently uneven and washed away, the operator of the Golf Course stated this is something they would benefit from.

In response to Commissioner Dake's question regarding what this will look like and whether it will be an eyesore to the Golf Course. Mr. Smith stated that with the temporary construction easement, you will not notice any difference, other than an improved cart path roadway. For the permanent easement, there will be a gas area, and pipes but it will be behind a fence not to be an eyesore.

In response to Commissioner Dake's question regarding the \$10,887, Mr. Smith stated there are two forms of compensation being proposed, the first would be cash deposited into the golf fund to be used for the highest priority projects. The other is the benefits that NV Energy is going to do as well, which is the cost of improving the cart path.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding the \$10,887, Mr. Smith stated it would be rolled over into the fund so the people Golf Course operators can use it for improvements. Commissioner Neumann asked if the projects would come to Washoe County, Mr. Smith stated it would go into a Washoe County account in order be used. The Golf Course operators have a good relationship with Washoe County and know what's needed, there are a number of projects they could both agree on to use the funds for.

In response to Commissioner Kuczenski's question regarding the title of the agenda item and the easement documents, Mr. Smith stated the negotiations of the actual easements have not been finalized, and the item before the Commission today is asking for advisement to the Board of County Commissioners on how they should vote on the final documents, and structures it in a way to allow the Division Director to finalize negotiations to bring with the recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Motion by Commissioner Neumann to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to approve the following easement deeds between Washoe County (grantor) and NV Energy (grantee) to support the instillation of a gas main and gas regulator housing: a temporary construction easement for the gas main totaling

±7.64 acres and a permanent public use easement for the gas regulator totaling ±24,636 square feet on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 554-010-01, part of Sierra Sage Course, for payment of appraised value, \$10,887, or improvements of equal value in lieu of payment; and authorize the Division Director of Operations to establish the terms of an easement agreement with NV Energy.

NV Energy was also available for questions.

In response to Commissioner Duke's question about the expected length of disturbance to the Golf Course, Mr. Smith stated the project is proposed to start in June and would be six to eight weeks of anticipated construction for the temporary construction easement and a further timeline for the northern portion that would be less impactful to the Golf Course.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding the size of the permanent structure, Mr. Smith stated the permanent structure is about half an acre, the proposed temporary construction easement is 7.64 acres because of the long pathway. Mr. Smith stated there will be fencing, a railroad section and a drainage area that golfers might see, but other than that does not expect much impact on the aesthetics of the area.

Mark Sullivan with NV Energy stated that only fencing would be seen from the outside and will be made to look natural, inside the fencing will be pipes, valves and pressure regulators but will not be seen from the outside.

In response to Chair Jones' question regarding community outreach, Mr. Sullivan stated that one of the required processes is to talk to the Citizen's Advisory Board and a presentation was made last week. Mr. Sullivan stated they received questions regarding the location but had no concerns voiced by the public or the Board and there was no opposition to the proposal.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Duke.

No public comment.

Motion carried unanimously.

10. Presentation, discussion and possible approval of a Special Event Agreement with Reno Street Food, LLC for the Food Truck North Valleys events to be held at North Valleys Regional Park on every Thursday from

June 12, 2025, until August 7, 2025, in the amount of \$5,700 paid to Washoe County.

Stephanie D'Arcy, Park Operations Superintendent, introduced the event as a possible pilot program and extension to Food Truck Friday and introduced Steve Schroeder with Reno Street Food who gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding the number of food trucks, Mr. Schroeder stated he, along with Andy Brown, District Park Manager, identified 68 spaces that can be used for the food trucks, each truck is around 30 feet so only 8 trucks would be placed in the 68 spaces.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding baseball events and working with the league, Mr. Schroeder stated that he has reached out and worked with the Cal Ripken league. Cal Ripken has a Snack Shack concession stand that will be closed during the event as to not compete with the food trucks, and Mr. Schroeder will be donating \$1000 to the league for closure. Stephanie D'Arcy stated that all the leagues that utilize the park during that time frame and have not received any concerns from them.

In response to Commissioner Kuczenski's question regarding field 3, Mr. Schroeder stated that Field 3 is underutilized during that time per District Manager Andy Brown and there is plenty of ability to manipulate where the event will be versus where the kids will play.

Motion by Commissioner Neumann to approve a Special Event Agreement with Reno Street Food, LLC for the Food Truck North Valleys events to be held at North Valleys Regional Park on every Thursday from June 12, 2025, until August 7, 2025, in the amount of \$5,700 paid to Washoe County. Second by Commissioner Dake.

No public comment.

Motion carried unanimously.

11. Discussion, and possible approval of a revised request for sponsorship of the 2025 Artown Festival; waive park facility rental and use fees [in an amount of \$51,150] in consideration of Washoe County being recognized as a Sponsor; and approve the updated agreement with Artown for the Artown

Festival 2025 events to be held at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park on July 1, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, and 31 in 2025.

Stephanie D'Arcy, Park Operations Superintendent, stated a special event agreement was brought before the board in January, which was approved by the Park Commission. In meetings following that approval it was discovered that there were dates and events included in that agreement that should not have fallen underneath that agreement. A revised agreement is being brought to the Commission today. The revised agreement will decrease the waived fees from \$87,400 to \$51,150 and approval of the item would update the agreement to the correct dates and decrease the ask for sponsorship.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question on the sponsorship amount, Ms. D'Arcy stated the sponsorship amount would decrease to \$51,150 from \$87,400. The initial agreement had additional dates in the request that are not needed and should not have been included.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding whether Artown profits from events, Ms. D'Arcy stated the events are free and open to the public.

In response to Commissioner Dake's question regarding other changes to the agreement, Ms. D'Arcy stated the only changes are the dates and revised sponsorship amount.

In response to Chair Jones' question regarding policies and procedures on fee waivers, Ms. D'Arcy said there is no current policy and waivers would need to be approved by the Park Commission. There has been discussion about creating a matrix of what would and would not qualify for a fee waiver to better guide the Commissioners on ways to move forward and to be transparent to promoters requesting waivers.

Chair Jones requested staff put together draft guidelines to get a better understanding of how the fee waivers are being constructed.

In response to Commissioner Kearney's question regarding the dates in the agreement, as they are headliner dates whose tickets cost money, making them not free and open to the public, Ms. D'Arcy stated it was her understanding that the events at Rancho San Rafael were not ticketed events, but she will clarify and get the direct information from Artown and follow up with the Commissioners.

Commissioner Neumann stated that if admission fees are charged to watch the shows, he does not believe it should be a free event for Artown.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding fees charged, Ms. D'Arcy stated it was her understanding that the events would be free but would follow up with Artown and let the Commissioners know.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question about the special meeting in April, and tabling the item until then, Chair Jones stated that the item can be tabled until the April 23rd meeting and that all Park Commission meetings are public meetings.

Motion by Commissioner Neumann to table the item until clarification is received that all headliner events are free to the public or if they are charging for them.
Second by Commissioner Kearney.

No public comment.

In response to Commissioner Joell's question on the effect on Artown's timeline, Ms. D'Arcy stated that she does not have the insight into how Artown would be affected but anticipates it would be an area of concern, but not one that would push the Commissioners to approve something they were not ready to approve.

In response to Commissioner Dake's question regarding the previous approval of the fee waiver, Lindsay Liddell, Deputy District Attorney, stated the changes to the agreement do not negate the previous approval of the fee waiver. Commissioner Dake stated the agreement was already approved, and this would be a modification. Artown still has approval for the event but would like more clarity and to have it brought back at the next meeting.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding if the dates were already reserved, Ms. D'Arcy stated the dates are reserved for Artown, the question at hand is whether Washoe County would be covering the cost or they would be charged.

Chair Jones stated that the approval Artown received in January still stands.

Motion carried unanimously and the original motion was tabled.

Chair Jones called for a 10-minute recess. The meeting was back in session at 3:06pm

Chair Jones stated there was a new amended motion due to new information received during recess.

Amended motion by Commissioner Neumann to approve a revised request for sponsorship of the 2025 Artown Festival; waive park facility rental and use fees [in an amount of \$51,150] in consideration of Washoe County being recognized as a Sponsor; and approve the updated agreement with Artown for the Artown Festival 2025 events to be held at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park on July 1, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, and 31 in 2025.

Deputy District Attorney, Lindsay Liddell, recommended staff speak on the new information that was received.

Stephanie D'Arcy, Park Operations Superintendent, stated staff was able to contact Artown directly during the recess and they have confirmed that the events at Rancho San Rafael are free and open to the public.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Kearney.

No public comment.

Motion carried unanimously.

12. Review and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to approve an Employee Residence Agreement between Washoe County and Andrew Brown (Community Services Department, Operations Division employee) to allow occupancy within the County owned residence located at Bowers Mansion Regional Park, 4005 Old Highway US 395 N, Washoe Valley, Nevada, 89704, commencing upon execution, in an amount of [\$500] to be held as security deposit and security services provided to the entire facility in lieu of monthly rent.

Aaron Smith, Division Director of Operations, stated the item is for the vacant residence at Bowers Mansion Regional Park, and the agreement with Washoe County and Andy Brown are in exchange for caretaker responsibilities, including unscheduled response to alarms and emergency calls during all hours, opening and closing gates, responding to calls for law enforcement or emergency response.

Andy Brown was the resident of Davis Creek until it was destroyed along with many personal belongings in the Davis Fire.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding Andy Brown and his loss to the Davis Fire, Mr. Smith stated that he is and will be doing the same duties he had before at Davis Creek. Andy Brown is the District Manager for Parks.

Motion by Commissioner Dake to approve an Employee Residence Agreement between Washoe County and Andrew Brown (Community Services Department, Operations Division employee) to allow occupancy within the County owned residence located at Bowers Mansion Regional Park, 4005 Old Highway US 395 N, Washoe Valley, Nevada, 89704, commencing upon execution. Second by Commissioner Neumann.

Commissioner Joell stated he wholeheartedly supports the motion for Mr. Brown as well as the benefit the parks get out of having an on-site resident Ranger. In response to Commissioner Joell's question regarding the rebuilding of the Davis residence, Mr. Smith stated there are still plans to rebuild the residence at Davis Creek. Washoe County is currently waiting for insurance adjustments to come back with amounts and will go from there through the Capital Projects Team to rebuild the residence.

No public comment.

Motion carried unanimously.

13. Parks Reports

Stephanie D'Arcy, Park Operations Superintendent, gave the reports. Ms. D'Arcy stated Commissioners received updated reports from respective divisions in their packets and would like to utilize her time to recognize the hard work and innovative programs created by staff and their services to the community.

Thursday, April 3rd, from 6:00pm to 7:00pm, Bartley Ranch will host the first of a series called Washoe County Rocks that will focus on amazing minerals and formations you can see throughout the Great Basin.

Saturday, April 5th, from 1:00pm to 2:30pm, Junior Rangers will get a chance to safely explore Davis Creek Regional Park to see and learn firsthand the impacts of wildfire on landscapes and the challenges the community faces to bring back sensitive areas. Sign ups can be done ahead of time on the Washoe County Parks website.

Washoe County Juvenile Services Youth Employment Program is working with the Rangers at Lazy 5 Regional Park to complete a beautification project including murals and areas to create chalk art at the skate park. The project is halfway done and staff is excited to see the results.

Construction has begun for an accessible playground at Rancho San Rafael. The new playground will allow different abled users to be included in play. The opening is expected to be mid-summer.

The Wilbur D May Arboretum has 65 yards of donated mulch from local arborists have been spread throughout the property, approximately 1000 seeds that have been planted at the green house, and 20 trees and shrubs donated by the May Arboretum Society that are ready for planting.

The Wilbur D May Museum is hosting The Lost World of Dragons exhibit until the end of April. Attendance has been steady, multiple field trips have been scheduled, and a new birthday party program is being trialed in hopes to increase revenue and visibility

Significant work has been done in Hidden Valley Regional Park by the maintenance and trail team. Much of the park was damaged from the flood, staff are spending time rebuilding and improving trail access to the system and adding access ramps for ditch crossings at several locations.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding the BMX bike track at Sun Valley Regional Park, Ms. D'Arcy stated construction has begun, the access road has started, and they are working on the pump track, it is going well and is a great opportunity to revitalize the area and provide users with a great opportunity in the park.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question regarding moving the fence at the Arboretum, Ms. D'Arcy stated it is still in the plans to do.

No public comment.

14. Director's Report

Eric Crump, Director of Community Services Department, gave the report.

The Board of County Commissioners approved the agreement with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation for ongoing maintenance of the disc golf courses within the Washoe County Parks system

The Board of County Commissioners approved a memorandum of understanding which provides framework for a cooperative effort associated with the Tahoe Bike Path. The memorandum identified the Tahoe Transportation District and allowed the ability to receive funds on all the stakeholder's behalf.

The Board of County Commissioners approved a change in regulatory zoning. The Galena School House was zones as low density suburban and there was approval to change to a parks and recreation zone so park activities can take place.

The Board of County Commissioners appointed Tracy Kuczenski to the Park Commission in March.

In response to Commissioner Kuczenski's question about the bike transportation project funding, Mr. Crump stated it is federal funding earmarked for the Lake Tahoe Basin and from his understanding, as of now, has not been impacted by current federal changes.

15. Commissioner Request for Future Agenda Items

Request by Commissioner Neumann for an update on Sun Valley Regional Park and an update on plans at the Wilbur D May Arboretum.

Request by Chair Jones to add One Truckee River to the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting.

16. Public Comments

No public comment.

17. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Neumann. Second by Commissioner Dake.
Carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Roebuck, Office Specialist

Chair Neal Jones