

F O R E W O R D

In General

The Washoe County Code contains, for the first time in the history of Washoe County, a comprehensive revision of effective Washoe County ordinances of general application. In March 1953, the board of county commissioners employed me to compile and revise the Washoe County ordinances enacted since the creation of the county in 1861. Until 1953 no effort had been made to collect and analyze the various orders, resolutions and ordinances adopted since the creation of the county. The 1953 compilation and revision task involved a complete and detailed research of all of the records of the board of county commissioners from 1861 to 1953. There was in the records of the proceedings of the board of county commissioners a mass of dead wood representing the accumulation of a period of over 90 years. In August 1955, the board of county commissioners enacted Washoe County Ordinance No. 43, adopting the revised ordinances, pursuant to the authority contained in chapter 296, Statutes of Nevada 1955, and published the revised ordinances in looseleaf book form. The 1955 statute did not authorize a codification of county ordinances.

In 1961 the legislature enacted NRS 244.116 et seq. authorizing each board of county commissioners to provide for the revision and codification, including such restatements and substantive changes as necessary for clarity and consistency, of all general ordinances of the county, and to provide for the indexing and publication of such ordinances in the form of a county code. This 1961 statutory authority was not exercised by the board of county commissioners until 1979. In the interim from 1955 to 1982 the county clerk performed an admirable job in attempting to update the 1955 compilation as new and amendatory ordinances were enacted. However, the housekeeping efforts of the county clerk did not involve analyses of overlapping and inconsistent ordinances or those which had been impliedly repealed by the enactment of subsequent ordinances.

In July 1979, the board of county commissioners contracted with me to revise and codify the general ordinances of Washoe County. Again, a careful examination had to be made of the records of the proceedings of the board of county commissioners, this time for the period 1953 to 1981. A compilation of all general ordinances was prepared and copies of all orders and resolutions made or adopted by the board of county commissioners affecting the administration of Washoe County were copied preliminary to revision.

The revision process involved:

1. The collection into chapters of all ordinance sections and parts of sections and orders and resolutions that related to the same subject and the orderly arrangement into sections of the material assembled in each chapter.
2. The elimination of inoperative or obsolete, duplicated and impliedly repealed sections and parts of sections.
3. Wherever feasible, the elimination of unnecessary words and the improvement of the grammatical structure and physical form of sections.

During the revision process, precaution was taken so as not to change the meaning or substance of the ordinances. However, long sections were divided into shorter sections (which reduces the complications and expense incident to future amendment of the ordinances) i whole sections or parts of sections relating to the same subject were sometimes combined; sentences within a section, and words within a sentence, were rearranged; and the correct names of officers, agencies and funds were substituted for incorrect designations.

Method and Form of Publication

Because of the county's financial limitations and constant changes in the field of county ordinances, it was decided to publish a code bound in inexpensive looseleaf binders. The use of the looseleaf method makes it possible to keep the Washoe County Code up to date, without using pocket parts or supplements or completely reproducing and rebinding the code, simply by the insertion of new pages.

The Numbering System

A permanent and expandable decimal numbering system has been selected, thus eliminating in future editions of the Washoe County Code the necessity of renumbering. Under the adopted decimal system, the number to the left of the decimal point indicates the number of the chapter in which the section is located, while the number to the right indicates the relative position of the section within the chapter. Thus, the tenth section in chapter 15 is section 15.100. The fifteenth section is section 15.150. When it is once understood that the number to the left of the decimal point is the chapter number, and the number to the right of the decimal point indicates the order of the section within that chapter, the system is easily comprehended.

The chapters are numbered progressively with Arabic numerals. A progressive rather than a consecutive system has been used in order that additional chapters may be inserted in the future without renumbering.

Within each chapter, the sections are generally numbered by 10's. In some instances, however, the excessive number of sections in a chapter has necessitated numbering by 5's, 3's and even 1's. The purpose of generally numbering by 10's is to make available unused numbers, thus enabling future ordinances to be compiled in their proper place without disturbing the uniformity of the numbering system or without renumbering existing sections.

Ordinance History

Except for sections added by the reviser, the ordinance history for each section of the Washoe County Code has been inserted in brackets immediately following the code section. Each ordinance history contains a reference to the source section of the original ordinance from which the code section is derived, together with references to subsequent amendments. Some ordinance histories contain citations to bill numbers and item numbers of the minutes of meetings of the board of county commissioners (example: 74-485) in lieu of citations to amendatory ordinances. This device had to be employed by the reviser because of confusion existing in the office of the county clerk relative to the numbering of amendatory ordinances.

Index

The index is keyed to the section numbers of the Washoe County Code.

Ann Rollins edited the manuscript of the Washoe County Code and Pat DeLong of the county manager's office did the typing for the camera-ready copy. To them I extend my thanks. I also acknowledge the help and cooperation of Kenneth Herndon, head of the county's reproduction department, and Joyce Devise, the county purchasing and contracts administrator, in the publication of the code.

It is hoped that the Washoe County Code fulfills the experienced need for an orderly arrangement of the general ordinances of Washoe County and justifies the judgment of the board of county commissioners in the expenditure of public funds in connection therewith.

Russell W. McDonald

Reno, Nevada
1982