



Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board held November 18, 2021 at the Gerlach Community Center, 410 Cottonwood in Gerlach, NV and via teleconference.

1. *CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM – The meeting was called to order at **6:10 p.m.** A quorum was determined.

CAB MEMBERS Present Elisabeth 'Schatzi' Gambrell, Tina Walters, Andy Moore, Kristy Evans, Allen Nash

2. *PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

3. *GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT AND DISCUSSION THEREOF – There were no requests for public comment.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF MAY 13, 2021 (for Possible Action) Elisabeth Gambrell recommended to postpone the approval minutes until the next meeting.

5. INTRODUCTIONS OF NEW WASHOE COUNTY STAFF MEMBERS Marc De La Torre, Candee Ramos, Alexandra Wilson and new CAB format (Non-Action Item)

Candee Ramos introduced the new staff and provided a CAB format overview and two-track system. She spoke about ARPA funding. She encouraged the CAB and public members to provide feedback on the website.

Ms. Gambrell inquired who could email the CAB email. Ms. Ramos confirmed anyone, including the public, can email CAB email – cab@washoecounty.gov

Kristy Evans asked how the public could contact this CAB. Ms. Ramos stated that email addresses are online; she advised that if a public member emails you, please do not reply-all as it would be an Open Meeting Law violation.

Ms. Gambrell invited the public to contact the CAB members if they have any topics they would like to discuss.

6. INTERPRETIVE TRAIL PRESENTATION – Dave Cooper (Non-Action Item)

Dave Cooper provided an introduction and overview of the interpretive trail. He handed out a crude map of the trail.

Ms. Evans asked if this was accepted, would the Parks department be responsible for getting approval through the various agencies. Mr. Cooper confirmed.

Andy Moore asked about the deadline for the application. Mr. Cooper stated March 1.

Allen Nash asked about turning the GID's property and making it public. He asked if BLM would administer that. Mr. Cooper stated it would be handed over to the BLM. Ms. Gambrell stated she

researched this after it was brought to the GID. She stated there is a statute where the land can be donated or purchased under the Public Lands Act and would not affect our requirements on how we sell our lands. It would not require us to go to an open bid. She stated we have been talking about this for a year now. She said she is grateful for this. Mr. Cooper stated this is the beginning. It will take a few years to come about. He stated we are looking at 2024. He said we have to get partnerships and a committee together. He said this would be a real economic asset.

Andy Moore inquired what type of trail it would be. Mr. Cooper stated it would be a boardwalk for hiking, biking, golf carts. He said there is great access off the highway by the gas station. He spoke about access to the playa. He said it would take care of the off-highway vehicles going through the neighbor's property.

A public member's asked if Mr. Cooper has spoken with Burning Man. He stated he has heard different iterations of this trail from different people. Mr. Cooper spoke about partnerships involvements. He spoke about making it a loop with restrooms. It will be handicap accessible. He said he will ask for support letters from partners and ask how they can contribute. He stated it could potentially get larger. He said if the GID gives up the 38 acres and BLM land that will come into public land. Ms. Gambrell recommended a 'Welcome to Gerlach' sign.

Ms. Evans asked who would manage it. Mr. Cooper stated BLM would manage it. She asked who would manage the trash. Mr. Cooper stated BLM and Friends of Black Rock volunteers would help with trash.

Mr. Cooper stated there would be a follow-up meeting. He stated he would get a letter from GID and County. It will be a large project. He said he would look for people to sit on the committee to help finish the application.

7. FUTURE CAB SCHEDULE - Frequency of meetings & set date and time of next meeting (for Possible Action)

The Board members discussed frequency, date, and time. The Board decided to hold it monthly, 3rd Thursday, 6 p.m. and cancel if necessary.

MOTION: Elisabeth Gambrell moved to hold the CAB meeting scheduled for monthly, on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6 p.m. Allen Nash seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS - Elections by the CAB members will be held to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair for 2021/2022 term, elected officers will be effective immediately (for Possible Action)

The board discussed the positions of chair and vice chair.

MOTION FOR CHAIR: Allen Nash nominated Tina Walter. Andy Moore seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

MOTION FOR VICE CHAIR: Tina Walters nominated Elisabeth Gambrell. Kristy Evans seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

9. WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE- Washoe County Commissioner Jeanne Herman may be available to provide updated information on discussions and actions by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). [Non-Action Item]

Jeanne Herman congratulated the CAB. She introduced the County Staff: Nancy Leuenhagen and Eric Brown. She thanked Mr. Brown for bringing back the CAB.

10. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS — This item is limited to announcements and/or requests for future agenda items by CAB members. (Non-Action Item)

Marissa Giampaoli provided an update Gerlach Volunteer Fire, Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Fire. She stated they would like more active volunteers on the fire department. Jonathen Prichard provided an update. He said we have had conversations with the Assistant County Managers' office regarding our agreements and with Vaughn Hartung. Pyramid Lake is providing more than mutual aid to Gerlach due to lack of staffing. We don't have a date when this will be put on the Board of County Commissioners' agenda. It could be as early as January. There are concerns about how long this will draw out. We are doing the job right now due to a lack of staffing. We want to know the timeline to move forward with the County. He said Chief Pelt had had several conversations with the County. We have been sitting in limbo. We have submitted a proposal to the County in August/September. He said that is the only update he has been aware of since last week. Allen Nash asked if Pyramid Lake could do a better and efficient job than Truckee Meadows. Mr. Prichard stated as of now yes. We have several programs we could offer and provide ALS service to Gerlach and the service area. He provided an example of service call in Vya for an intense call with three Washoe County deputies. Not knowing when won't have coverage is the downside. He said we would be able to provide it with our proposal. He said there is a large elderly population that would benefit. Mr. Gambrell thanked them for cleaning up the firehouse property. She thanked them for working to cover. Mr. Prichard said in the agreement, we would provide 24/7 service with paramedic level coverage. Ms. Gambrell asked if they would be in Gerlach or living within area of responsibility. He said we propose providing a 2-person on a 48-96 schedule. We would be increasing staffing with two people, 24/7. Ms. Walters asked if this will be added on the BCC agenda.

Ms. Gambrell spoke about issues with our fire department being currently unmanned. She said she understands there is a consideration with merging with Truckee Meadow Fire. She read an email dated Nov. 17, 2020 regarding the general fund averaging a little over \$300,000 annually in the last five years to Truckee Meadows Fire District to manage the operations up here. Truckee Meadows says they spend \$600,000 annually for their ready charge, including Gerlach management services. She said she has yet to find anything about how that \$600,000 is being spent. She said she knows that's not salaries. She said that brings her to the discussion of payment in lieu of taxes. She said she sat down and counted 444 pieces of property, and it came up according to 2019 payment in lieu of taxes; Washoe County received approximately 3 million dollar range for 2,623,170 acres. In KPBZ, which is Gerlach, we are 2,934,376 paid by the federal government. We are 2,623,170 acres. She said she doesn't understand why we don't have a fire department. She said things that have happened in the last 5 months have been very tragic. She said she would like this on the agenda so we can have the fire chief attend to understand the contracting, where our money is going, and how we are being supported. She said she would like that to be explained. She said public members want to know what is happening. She said it's been frustrating. She said she believes it will be well attended.

Ms. Gambrell recommended putting the deputy sheriff 24/7 patrol on the agenda. She explained they get off at 4:30 a.m. and go to their house. They are being paid \$9.00 an hour to sleep, but if they get

a call, they have to go out. The other day when we had that call at 3:00 a.m. they would be responsible for that call. Sometimes they get called out to Vya. 24/7 service is critical to our community. Kristy Evans said she works for the school district. She said we are deeply concerned about the lack of coverage. She said we don't have a school police officer; we have to wait for the sheriff deputy who potentially 2 hours away. If we have concerns about our children, it's a two-hour minimum. It's a real problem.

Ms. Gambrell spoke about how important the ARPA money is for this community. She said we took a tour today and went up to the water towers. She said someone dumped the insides of their trailer out up there. There is a refrigerator, trash, and stove. There are campfires. A public member stated he is working to clean it up.

Ms. Gambrell spoke about a grant through the economic development committee for a dark-sky initiative to get designation as a state dark sky area which would change some planning. It would change a lot of things in town and out at the ranches through the valley. There is money out there. She will provide more information at next month's meeting. She said we applied for a grant for new windows and doors for the community center. She stated the new floors should be done on December 15 and in time for the next meeting. She said we are looking for grants and people to be on the committee. Andy Moore stated the exterior would need to be done as well.

Ms. Evans spoke about the frustration with the lack of Gerlach involvement with permitting for Burning Man. The County has not asked for our feedback. We are experiencing the biggest headaches and benefits. We would like a bigger voice in the permitting process. Mr. Brown stated we will put this on the agenda. Ms. Evans said there are a lot of agencies that have to approve the permits, and we would like to be part of it. Mr. Cooper stated there are stakeholders' meetings. He suggested having a CAB member sit in on that meeting in Reno.

Ms. Evans spoke about blight in our community. She would like to address long-term blight and see how the County can address it. Ms. Gambrell stated there are grants that can help.

11. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT –

Commissioner Herman mentioned that the County has been working on re-districting. She said no one has tried to grab Gerlach and bring it down. Ms. Gambrell said there was no outreach in Gerlach. Mr. Brown said the information is available online.

Mr. Brown provided an update and response to the discussion. He said the update from Jonathen – there are still discussions. The current situation is unacceptable. Depending on how much money is available, it will require commissioner approval. He said this is why it wasn't fixed yesterday. He said it's the same thing with the Sheriff. He said Commissioner Herman had been a proponent of increasing staffing levels at the Sheriff's office. He said a lot of people retired and moved. He said finding replacement deputies is difficult. He said the December 14 Board of County Commissioner's meeting, a proposal will go forward to use ARPA funds to address Sheriff's service level issues. They are short staff. There are CAB meetings where they haven't been able to attend because they are short staff. He spoke about broadband solutions. Broadband solutions will most likely not require ARPA funding. He said we are working with the library and schools to bring broadband out here. He said we want to include Burning Man into this solution. We want Pyramid Lake Tribe have offered their facilities between Highway 80 and Nixon. He said we met with them yesterday and the Office of Technology and Science staff. He said if all goes well, we will offer an RFP by the end of the year. We have to know who our vendors will be. He said we are hopeful on that front. We are having

ongoing discussions with Burning Man. He spoke about planning in this area. He said your Vice Chair was asking why we have to go through the same process as the other parts of the County. He said he has been speaking with the Commissioners who agreed Gerlach shouldn't have to go through the same process as the rest of the County. Burning Man and public members has also requested this. There are certain things you shouldn't have to do that are currently being required. We are trying to develop a concierge for this area. He said if you want the trail project, you will have letters from me. Ms. Evans asked about the broadband timeframe. Mr. Brown stated it would be about a year. He said the idea is to serve not only the community, but also Palomino Valley. The State has a lot of broadband money from ARPA infrastructure money. They are being very aggressive. There shouldn't be unserved households. He said he is very hopeful it will be a lot better and a lot quicker. Andy Moore asked if it was fiber. Mr. Brown said yes. It will come to the school and library. He said we would have to terminate a facility there. He said we would address how we would serve homes. He said he used to do this for a living. The State of California is doing the same process for the colleges and schools. They have given a hired consultant to put in the broadband. He said he went over to California for couple of days to understand their process. He spoke about fixed wireless. He said we are exploring how we get it to homes and businesses.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.