

WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSION
RENO CITY COUNCIL
SPARKS CITY COUNCIL

JOINT MEETING

TUESDAY

9:00 A.M.

MARCH 18, 2003

PRESENT:

Jim Shaw, Washoe County Commissioner, Vice Chairman

Jim Galloway, Washoe County Commissioner

Pete Sferrazza, Washoe County Commissioner

Bonnie Weber, Washoe County Commissioner

Robert A. Cashell, City of Reno, Mayor

Dave Aiazzi, Reno City Councilmember *

Toni Harsh, Reno City Councilmember *

Pierre Hascheff, Reno City Councilmember

Jessica Sferrazza, Reno City Councilmember

Sharon Zadra, Reno City Councilmember

Tony Armstrong, City of Sparks, Mayor

Geno Martini, Sparks City Councilmember

John Mayer, Sparks City Councilmember

Phil Salerno, Sparks City Councilmember

Ron Schmitt, Sparks City Councilmember

ABSENT:

David Humke, Washoe County Commissioner, Chairman

Dwight Dortch, Reno City Councilmember

Michael Carrigan, Sparks City Councilmember

The Board and Councils met in joint session in the Council Chambers of Reno City Hall, 490 South Center Street, Reno, Nevada. Also present were Assistant Washoe County Manager Michelle Poché, Deputy District Attorney Blaine Cartlidge, County Clerk Amy Harvey, Reno City Manager Charles McNeely, Reno City Attorney Patricia Lynch, Reno City Clerk Lynnette Jones, Sparks City Manager Shaun Carey, and Sparks Deputy City Clerk Lenda Azcarate. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerks called the roll for their respective entities, and the Commission and Councils conducted the following business:

03-283 **AGENDA**

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Commissioner Shaw, seconded by Councilmember Hascheff, which motion duly carried, Mayor Cashell ordered that the agenda for the March 18, 2003 joint meeting be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robert Gonzales and Darren View spoke against the impending war with Iraq. Sam Dehne suggested the Boards place an item on one of their future agendas so a discussion could be held concerning the war and sang "America the Beautiful." Tyrus Cobb and Eddie Anderson suggested citizens should support the President.

03-284 **DISCUSSION/DIRECTION - MERGER/CONSOLIDATION -
FUNCTIONS/SERVICES**

Reno City Manager Charles McNeeley noted the reports in the Board members' packets, one from Leann McElroy, Chief of Staff, City of Reno, regarding a chronological history of a placeholder bill draft request (BDR) for the 2003 Legislature concerning consolidation, and one from City Attorney Patricia Lynch outlining consolidation methods allowed under Nevada law.

Lois Avery, Chairman, Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board, stated the only consolidated function so far has been the Reno and Truckee Meadows Fire Departments, and that was not a true consolidation. She stated it was Reno taking over and that perception was also evident by the Reno fire people at a training she attended. Ms. Avery said any future consolidations must be true mergers of equals, and not takeovers.

John Howe, Washoe County resident, stated it is too early to propose legislation for consolidation. He further stated there is no reason to have the Legislature rule over the business in Washoe County, and it is unlikely consolidation will be a success without participation by the City of Sparks.

Sam Dehne, Reno citizen, spoke against consolidation, stating it would never work in this community.

Bill Horn, General Manager, Incline Village General Improvement District (GID), and Chairman of Independent Incline Village, stated Incline Village would like to have better representation at the table when consolidations and mergers are being discussed. He said their fire district, recreation, water, sewer, trash collection, senior citizen programs, and before-and-after school programs would be impacted by consolidation. Mr. Horn stated they already have inadequate representation at the Washoe County School District, the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority, and the Regional Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Galloway noted that, if the bodies do go forward and begin substantive talks about consolidation, other parties should be included, such as the Incline Village GID and Sun Valley GID. He asked if the Reno City Council has formally committed not to pursue legislation this session; and if not, would they make such a commitment.

*** 9:40 a.m.** Councilmember Harsh arrived.

Councilmember Sferrazza stated the County had the opportunity to put consolidation on the Countywide ballot and chose not to do so; whereas, the City of Reno did hear from its residents that they would like to see more consolidation. She stated she would like a commitment from the County that they would work with the City on consolidating street maintenance and other functions before the City agrees to drop the legislation.

Mayor Cashell agreed the GID's should be at any consolidation talks. He explained that the City has not gone forward with a BDR; they have just reserved a BDR for enabling legislation.

Councilmember Hascheff stated he has read Commissioner Galloway's memo, which was included in the agenda packet. He suggested there is a corporate model that could be used for consolidation and stated a plan that all parties agree to must be submitted before any legislation. All of the issues could be addressed in the plan; and, if they are not, there is no agreement.

Commissioner Sferrazza stated he supports consolidation and does not object to enabling legislation because all that does is enable the parties to go forward if there is agreement. He also stated limited consolidation between the City of Reno and Washoe County should have no impact on Sparks or Incline Village. Commissioner Sferrazza said, if Incline Village does not want to be a part of consolidation, there would be ways to protect them. He stated he also had a consolidation model and suggested that the members who do support the concept work together on a plan to present to the others. Commissioner Sferrazza said consolidation is never going to happen if the Commission and Council keep going the way they have been.

Commissioner Galloway stated enabling legislation that only establishes a framework of governance is not sufficient to protect the interests of all the people in the Truckee Meadows because there is no assurance that any plan is later adhered to by the governing bodies. He stated protection from existing debt and \$180-million worth of deferred street maintenance are the kinds of things that should be in the legislation and should not be left as issues to be decided later. Commissioner Galloway further stated he is not sure it is viable to discuss government consolidation when only one of two Cities is involved. He reiterated that the County is willing to explore consolidation of services and functions such as road maintenance.

Mayor Cashell expressed his concern about the studies conducted so far regarding consolidation stating that only parts of functions are being analyzed instead of whole departments, such as street maintenance or park maintenance. He said the entire operation should be analyzed. Mayor Cashell further stated the taxpayers of Reno and Sparks pay into the District Health Department, yet the Cities have no say in the District Health Department budget cuts being made by the County. He emphasized the importance of everyone working together.

Commissioner Shaw pointed out that the District Health Board has representation from the Cities and agreed with Mayor Cashell that communication keeps going and is open. He stated the residents of unincorporated Washoe County are very concerned about the impacts of consolidation, and the City of Reno surprised everyone with the BDR.

Commissioner Weber stated she could not support the enabling legislation at this time. She said there needs to be more joint meetings specifically concerning consolidation issues to see if everyone can come together and do what is best for all of the citizens of Washoe County.

Councilmember Hascheff explained they were facing a deadline on the BDR, and enabling legislation just says the entities can consolidate if they want to. He stated the details of the plan should not be in the legislation, and the plan should be flexible so that all the issues and concerns can be addressed there. Once the plan is complete, including the business plan, it would be presented to the voters.

* **10:00 a.m.** Chairman Humke temporarily joined the meeting by telephone.

Commissioner Galloway stated one area with which he disagrees is the governing body members running "at-large" versus having strict district representation. Mayor Cashell stated those are the kinds of issues that would be negotiated in the plan. Commissioner Galloway asked how they could make sure the deferred street maintenance in the City of Reno was not going to be paid for by the residents of Incline Village.

Mayor Cashell stated it appeared there would be no resolution to the consolidation issue at this time.

* **10:05 a.m.** Councilmember Aiazzi arrived.

**03-285 COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM -
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

Sue Donaldson, Weed and Water Quality Specialist, UNR Cooperative Extension, and Lori Bellis, Weed Management Area Coordinator, Nevada Department of Agriculture, showed several pictures of various invasive and noxious weeds. They

discussed the difficulty and expense of controlling these weeds and explained what problems could occur if these weeds are not controlled or eliminated. Ms. Donaldson noted the areas of Washoe County where the various weeds are starting to become a problem.

10:15 a.m. Mayor Cashell temporarily left the meeting, turning the gavel over to Mayor Armstrong.

Ms. Donaldson stated they are asking the County and Cities to support the formation of Cooperative Weed Management Areas by signing agreements and providing staff support.

Mayor Armstrong thanked Ms. Donaldson and Ms. Bellis for their presentation and requested an action item on the next joint meeting agenda to support the program. He also suggested organizing volunteers to work on this project.

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, stated a weed control program is needed and urged the Boards to do whatever they can to assist the program.

Councilmember Schmitt stated he disagrees that there is no cost because staff time does carry a cost, and he would want to know what staff participation includes, how much time, and the cost.

On motion by Councilmember Martini, seconded by Councilmember Mayer, which motion duly carried, Mayor Armstrong ordered that Sparks staff be directed to draw up an outline concerning what staff participation in a Cooperative Weed Management Area program includes and what the cost would be.

On motion by Councilmember Aiazzi, seconded by Councilmember Hascheff, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Reno staff be directed to draw up an outline concerning what staff participation in a Cooperative Weed Management Area program includes and what the cost would be.

On motion by Commissioner Galloway, seconded by Commissioner Sferrazza, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Washoe County staff be directed to draw up an outline concerning what staff participation in a Cooperative Weed Management Area program includes and what the cost would be.

10:27 a.m. Mayor Cashell returned to the meeting and assumed the gavel.

03-286 STATUS REPORT - REGISTRATION OF SEX OFFENDERS AND FELONS

Debi Campbell, Records Manager, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, reported that the Records Managers of the three entities met March 17, 2003 concerning procedures related to registration of sex offenders and felons. They found that they all

collect and disseminate the same information, as required by statute. The City of Sparks has an additional requirement of requiring sex offenders to register with them if they work in Sparks, whether they live there or not. Ms. Campbell noted the three entities all provide a different registration card with the City of Sparks using a photo card. She stated that is the main area of difference and staff would like direction from the Boards concerning whether the desire is to have all the entities using the same card.

Mayor Armstrong said he thinks the picture is very important. Ms. Campbell noted the cost of producing color photographs and stated Washoe County could put a black and white photo on their laminated card.

Councilmember Aiazzi suggested the City of Reno put this issue on a future agenda to receive input from the Reno Police Department.

Councilmember Martini asked how many sex offender pictures are taken. Ms. Campbell stated she does about 575 cards per year; the City of Reno does substantially more than that; and the City of Sparks does approximately 22 per day. She clarified that those numbers are for all convicted persons, not just sex offenders.

Commissioner Sferrazza suggested the County could contract with the City of Sparks to have them produce the cards. He also questioned the purpose of the card. Ms. Campbell stated it is just to prove that they are registered, and eventually the information will be available to law enforcement through the computer systems.

Councilmember Schmitt asked if the conviction information could be put on driver's licenses. Ms. Campbell said she did not know whether the Department of Motor Vehicles would be willing to do anything. Councilmember Schmitt stated he would like to see a statewide solution possibly using driver's licenses. Ms. Campbell advised as soon as SB218 passes the Legislature, the State will be working on a statewide process.

Jim Johns, Reno Police Department, advised that the only person who benefits from issuance of sex offender cards is the sex offender because the officer on the street is still going to run a records check.

Kathy Brandhurst addressed the Boards asking several questions about sex offenders and felons.

10:40 a.m. Councilmembers Mayer and Salerno left the meeting and the City of Sparks no longer had a quorum.

03-287 FLOOD CONTROL - EVANS CREEK

Karen Cernick, on behalf of the Washoe Vista Homeowners, expressed appreciation to the County Commission and the Reno City Council for taking positive steps toward flood control in northwest Reno.

Councilmember Aiazzi stated that while the County and the City of Reno have made progress, the concern is that nothing has really been done to solve the flooding problems of Evans Creek. He said there appears to be a dispute between whether the County or the City should be taking the lead in this flood control project. Councilmember Aiazzi said they keep doing studies and all they have done is take a dam out of the project.

Commissioner Sferrazza stated the flooding occurs in the City of Reno, but the watershed passes through both jurisdictions. He believes addressing the problem should be a joint, cooperative effort.

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, asked how much the dam is going to cost and who is going to pay for it.

On motion by Councilmember Hascheff, seconded by Councilmember Aiazzi, which motion duly carried, Mayor Cashell ordered that City staff be directed to meet with County staff and develop a plan and cost sharing for the Evans Creek flood control project and report back to City Council.

On motion by Commissioner Sferrazza, seconded by Commissioner Shaw, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that County staff be directed to meet with City staff and develop a plan and cost sharing for the Evans Creek flood control project and report back to the Board.

Commissioner Galloway stated he could support the motion as long as it does not presume that more studies are needed. He said, if the dam were not built, any new development would be required to fully retain all of its runoff so the situation does not worsen. Councilmember Aiazzi stated the engineers are advising that does not solve the downstream flooding problems. Mayor Cashell asked how the flooding problems at the University would be addressed. Councilmember Aiazzi stated the first study would be to redo the FEMA flood map; and, once that is done, they will know whether more studies are needed.

Commissioner Sferrazza amended his motion to request that the University of Nevada, Reno, be asked to contribute to the project since it would be a primary beneficiary of such a project. Commissioner Shaw stated he would second the amendment. Upon call for the vote, the amended motion carried unanimously.

03-288 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Commissioner Sferrazza explained a County legislative proposal to defer sales tax on tourism-related projects in the unincorporated area that may soon be introduced. Councilmember Aiazzi expressed concerns about the impacts to the Cities of Reno and Sparks since it is specifically for the unincorporated area. Councilmember Schmitt stated he thinks it is detrimental to the process of regionalization, but there are

some good things in the legislation; and anything that brings tourism to the area, benefits the whole area. He asked that the County consider taking "unincorporated" out of the legislation and have it apply to the entire State.

Commissioner Galloway noted the various tax proposals being discussed and warned that the local governments need to be vigilant in making sure the County and Cities are not impacted by the State.

03-289 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Following discussion, it was determined that the following items be included on the April joint meeting agenda: 1) 7th Member of Truckee Meadows Water Authority, 2) Animal Services, 3) District Health budget, 4) Flood Control, and 5) Fiscal Equity/EPS Study.

Commissioner Weber and Councilmember Aiazzi requested that a joint retreat be scheduled prior to the April joint meeting to consider consolidation issues.

There being no further business to come before the Boards, the meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

ATTEST:

JAMES M. SHAW, Vice Chairman
Washoe County Commission

AMY HARVEY, County Clerk
and Clerk of the Board of
County Commissioners

ATTEST:

ROBERT A. CASHELL, Mayor
City of Reno

LYNNETTE R. JONES, City Clerk
City of Reno

ATTEST:

TONY ARMSTRONG, Mayor
City of Sparks

DEBORINE J. DOLAN, City Clerk
City of Sparks

*Minutes Prepared By
Sharon Gotchy, Deputy County Clerk*