

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

FEBRUARY 20, 2024

PRESENT:

**Alexis Hill, Chair**  
**Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair**  
**Michael Clark, Commissioner**  
**Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner**  
**Clara Andriola, Commissioner**  
  
**Janis Galassini, County Clerk**  
**David Solaro, Assistant County Manager**  
**Nathan Edwards, Assistant District Attorney**

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:00 a.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, County Clerk Jan Galassini called roll and the Board conducted the following business:

**24-0079      AGENDA ITEM 3 Invocation.**

Mr. Rajan Zed of the Universal Society of Hinduism provided the invocation.

**24-0080      AGENDA ITEM 4 Public Comment.**

Ms. Ann Nichols provided a document that was distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She spoke about Item 6 and opined the entities involved in the Tahoe Destination Stewardship Council (TDSC) were seeking long-term funding options. She encouraged the Board to review the links she provided in her handout. She thought Item 6 was not about picking up trash; it was about taxing the public without a vote, which she declared was un-American.

Mr. Chris Phillips stated he was present in representation of the Downtown Reno Partnership (DRP) as a board member. He explained the DRP was a business improvement district (BID) and a 501(c)(6) that represented 1,500 property owners located in downtown Reno. He declared a DRP member would be before the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) every quarter to share details on the DRP's work in the downtown core. He shared that he was the Chief Operating Officer (COO) for the Reno Aces and that he lived downtown, so ensuring downtown Reno was clean and safe was paramount to him. He spoke about an ambassador program implemented by the DRP, noting the significant improvements it made to the cleanliness and safety of the downtown Reno area.

Ms. Tracey Hilton-Thomas read from a document which was placed on file with the Clerk. She spoke about the Bible and claimed it was not used for judgment or condemnation but for life, truth, and peace.

Ms. Valerie Fiannaca declared she had four mail-in ballots in her possession that were listed as submitted online. She claimed four people in her family were victims of a reported glitch in the Secretary of State's (SOS) voting system. She stated she was tired of problems occurring with elections. She believed the solution was one-day voting with paper ballots and hand-counting performed in the precincts. She thought that process would save the County money and restore the people's confidence in the election process.

Mr. Terry Brooks read an original poem about education as it was related to homelessness.

Ms. Elise Weatherly remarked she prayed for ears to hear. She stated she was the master of her fate and the captain of her soul. She spoke about her mother. She mentioned a song she wrote with Mr. Tom Gordon about lying lawyers. She discussed a dream she had. She expressed her desire to abolish homeowners' associations (HOA).

Mr. Jonathon McNeill spoke against Item 18. He claimed the proposed ordinance criminalized homelessness and poverty. He declared he was a Washoe County Leadership Academy (WCLA) member. He remarked that his class recently met with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO), where Sheriff Darin Balaam explained the WCSO's role in the community and the challenges faced by the department. Mr. McNeill noted the WCLA was introduced to Deputy Sheriff Craig Turner, who worked on the Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) Team. He said the HOPE Team consisted of three members: Deputy Turner, Deputy Sheriff Andres Silva, and Lieutenant Shatawna Daniel. He pointed out the HOPE Team members were not certified social workers. He reported in under three years, with minimal expertise and resources, the HOPE Team was able to pilot a program that successfully helped unhoused residents. He thought the proposed ordinance in Item 18 would perpetuate a stigma against people trapped in a cycle of homelessness. He asserted that the community needed to try harder to provide more resources for unhoused individuals before implementing the proposed ordinance. He asked the Board to vote no on Item 18.

Ms. Kailyn Lindop recalled that in the summer of 2014, she left a domestic abuse situation on her bicycle with a backpack containing her belongings. She remarked she was in an unstable state of mind and did not know where she would go. She said she sought help from multiple mental health hospitals that determined her mental state was not emergent enough for her to receive treatment. She tried to get into a rehabilitation center, which suggested she seek outpatient therapy and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). She shared she was now ten years sober from alcohol, an active member of AA, a productive member of society, and a homeowner in Washoe County. She believed if she had been criminalized when she did not have a safe place to go, her life would have turned out differently. She thought the ordinance proposed in Item 18 would not solve the unhoused epidemic; instead, it would criminalize Washoe County residents who were trying to get back on their feet.

She had coworkers and acquaintances who worked full-time and lived in their car because they were saving for a place to live. She asked the Board to direct the County's resources to affordable housing and accessible mental health care instead of criminalizing the unhoused.

Ms. Bridget Tevnon spoke in opposition to Item 18. She recalled federal point-in-time data taken between 2020 and 2022, which showed there was a 30 percent increase in first-time homelessness. She did not think fines and misdemeanor charges solved the housing crisis. She thought the ordinance was a waste of tax dollars that could be spent addressing underlying community needs and that it threatened the future stability of those experiencing homelessness. She opined resources needed to be shifted away from policies that codified the criminalization of poverty. She suggested the community fund safe parking, safe camping, case workers, mental health and substance use programs, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing. She declared that the limited services offered by the County did not work for service-resistant individuals. She claimed great work was happening in the community by holistic healthcare models, trauma-informed providers, nonprofits, mutual aid groups, and faith organizations. She asked the Board not to adopt Item 18.

Ms. Trista Gomez spoke about an incident involving Washoe County Code Enforcement Officer Steven Oriol regarding a short-term rental (STR) she owned. She mentioned fines she had incurred for not registering her rental property and declared she had not received answers to emails she sent to the County. She expressed frustration regarding permitting fees associated with STRs and fines associated with not obtaining a STR permit. She believed long-term rentals were a liability. She was trying to maintain her investment by having a STR. She discussed the fee discrepancy between STR permits and Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) or sole-proprietor fees.

Ms. Pam Darr discussed elections. She declared she ran a computer room for two years and was familiar with how computers operated. She thought a thorough investigation into the reported glitch with the SOS system was essential. She opined paper ballots would restore the community's faith in the voting system. She asserted the community should know everything that went on with elections.

Ms. Janet Butcher wondered how people could trust the voting system tabulation and the voter rolls. She read a statement released by the SOS regarding a data reporting issue that occurred. She questioned if the Washoe County Registrar of Voters (ROV) was responsible for the problem. She remarked the SOS statement said the glitch was not connected to the vote tabulation. She declared the issue was unacceptable and asked how many counties incurred the same error. She wondered how people could ensure the vote tabulation was correct. She claimed the County needed to perform a root-cause analysis and a complete process audit to provide a transparent report to the citizens. She did not think this was the time to change databases or move to a top-down reporting system.

Mr. Gordon Gossage stated he applied to be a Library Board of Trustees (LBT) member. He declared that if the Board selected him, he would work as hard as

possible to make the library system a national model for best practices. He spoke about his experience serving on the International Institute of New England (IINE) Board. He said he was familiar with co-creating new programs and cooperating with various stakeholders. He proposed increasing the library's collections and instituting extensive programs focused on common Western heritage.

Mr. Roger Edwards declared he applied to serve on the LBT. He spoke about election issues and noted he received multiple ballots. He asserted he was tired of issues with the ROV and elections. He said it was up to the Board to make the necessary changes. He believed homelessness was a problem in the family, not the community. He suggested the people in Chambers who spoke out against homelessness could solve homelessness by inviting unhoused residents to live with them. He identified as a lobbyist for the public and thought there were lobbyists present in Chambers who had not identified themselves in accordance with the Board's lobbyist ordinance.

Ms. Debbie Hudgens asserted people lost faith in the elections in 2020. She alleged that mail-in ballots were a scam. She reported having two unopened ballots at home that were marked as counted online. She spoke about voter statistics on the SOS website. She did not think top-down reporting would be helpful for election issues and would not restore the people's faith in elections. She declared people were motivated to make a difference in elections.

Ms. Teresa Reese spoke in opposition to Item 18. She stated unhoused people deserved constitutional rights. The Ninth District Court of Appeals, which included Washoe County, ruled that the Eighth Amendment's prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment barred people from being prosecuted criminally for sleeping outside or on public property when those people had no home or other shelter to go to. The Court further held that sitting, lying, and sleeping were defined as acts or conditions that were universal and unavoidable consequences of being human and, therefore, could not be criminalized. She wondered what the cost would be to defend Item 18 in the court system.

Mr. Bob Bloom declared social and economic systems created poverty. He claimed removing the ability to sleep in one's car eliminated the last place of shelter for many people. He suggested the County create a space for people to park their vehicles with proper sanitation and access to food. He asserted a paradigm shift was needed in which success was measured not only by wealth but also by providing solutions and helping those in need.

Ms. Rosie Zuckerman provided a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She stated she was part of a small group called Laundry to the People, which offered free laundry services to housing insecure and unhoused people in town. She expressed opposition to Item 18. She asserted the people affected by the ordinance were not criminals and did not have other options. They were people who had experienced hardships outside of their control. She mentioned some people she knew who recently received no-cause evictions, which forced them to leave Reno. She declared criminalizing homelessness was criminalizing poverty. She wanted to see ordinances that held landlords and rental

companies accountable and were geared towards stabilizing rent, not punishing people for trying to stay alive.

**10:51 a.m. Vice Chair Herman left the meeting.**

Rabbi Benjamin Zober stated he was a local rabbi and Faith In Action Nevada (FIANV) member. He mentioned Rabbi Maimonides, who outlined eight levels of tzedakah, or eight levels of charity. He said all giving was good, but Rabbi Maimonides saw a difference between someone who gave the bare minimum, and only because they were forced to, versus someone who gave anonymously and all they could, with all of their heart. He thought the ordinance in Item 18 did not meet any of Rabbi Maimonides's levels. For many reasons, some people could not or would not use available shelters and had no choice but to sleep in a public place. The ordinance would further punish them and make getting out of poverty even more difficult. He opined the issue could be solved by making housing affordable and accessible. He mentioned that it was World Social Justice Day, and people were doing what they could to make the world better, more fair, and more just for all.

Mr. Nicholas St. Jon displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. He stated the document proved that on February 6, 2024, the SOS marked his mail-in ballot as counted. He discussed statistics he pulled from the SOS database. He spoke about the reported issue regarding a glitch in the SOS database. He wondered if the Board planned to launch an investigation into the issue.

Mr. Patrick Coleman expressed support for Item 18. He remarked he was a business owner on Fourth Street. He claimed the area had become dangerous for businesses and residents. He thought the County had failed to provide services to people experiencing homelessness. He opined the Board needed to expand services for mental health care and addiction treatment. He spoke about low-barrier and no-barrier shelters. He asserted it should not be illegal for people to live on the street, and the County needed to ensure people got necessary services and treatments.

Reverend Clare Novak stated she was opposed to Item 18. She alleged the ordinance was broad in scope and poorly written. She thought the ordinance did not reflect collaboration with social services agencies and was not based on best practices or relevant data. She believed criminalizing basic acts of survival by poor people who lacked housing was unconstitutional, ineffective, and costly. Nationwide, similar ordinances were failing because they did nothing to alleviate the root causes of homelessness. She asked if there was evidence that displacing, penalizing, and incarcerating people living on the streets or in their vehicles changed their behavior. She urged the Board to block the ordinance. She claimed resources should be invested in approaches that prevent, assist, and solve homelessness.

Mr. Douglas Sobolik stated he was an unhoused person, displaced from Denver, CO. He wondered why the Board wanted to make him a criminal when he had nowhere to go. He asked what would happen to homeless people after they got out of jail.

He thought the proposed ordinance would make people desperate. He declared he had solutions to homelessness and was willing to talk to any of the Board members about them.

Mr. Scott Comstock said he was a Tahoe Woodcreek Regulatory Zone resident. He spoke in opposition to Item 19. He supported school choice and faith-based education; however, his neighborhood was not zoned to house schools. He asked the Board to remember that it was not a vote for or against school choice or faith-based education but a vote for or against rezoning a residential neighborhood to allow schools.

Mr. Michael Tang spoke in opposition to Item 18. He thought other communities had received backlash for similar ordinances. He claimed the ordinance went against the County's progress in addressing issues in the unhoused community.

Mr. Steve Wolgast was opposed to Item 18. He thought the proposed ordinance was immoral. He spoke about the housing crisis and mentioned that 85 percent of new rental housing was considered luxury. He asserted the community needed a better plan. He added that he served on the Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality (RISE) Board. He appreciated the County's support of Our Place, which he believed was a potential model for homeless solutions.

Ms. Penny Brock displayed a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She stated that one week prior, there was a United States Postal Service (USPS) meeting where she learned that the Reno distribution center would be moved to Sacramento. She mentioned chain of custody issues with mail-in ballots that would arise from that change. She discussed the recent issue with voter history in the SOS database and claimed computers did not glitch; computers did what they were programmed to do. She opined there was no election integrity. She recalled Commissioner Clark asked to place an item on the agenda so the Board could draft a letter to the USPS.

Ms. Aspen Murillo spoke in opposition to Item 18. She stated that the ordinance criminalized poverty, homelessness, and living without shelter. She claimed the ordinance's language was loose. She thought case management was a better way to help people access resources.

Mr. Doug Flaherty read from a document regarding Item 6 that was placed on file with the Clerk.

Mr. Prince Saruhan stated he had worked with FIANV since before COVID-19 (C19), and their concerns were focused on the housing insecure and homeless in the community. He spoke about the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF), which gave the County the power to enact a funding stream for affordable housing. He asked the Board to oppose Item 18. He thought the WCSO was not the best option to provide services to people who needed it the most.

Ms. Susan Vanness read from a document regarding the Nevada Voter Bill of Rights, which was distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk.

Ms. Joni Hammond opined the last election was an embarrassment for Washoe County. She wondered why the County's voter rolls were not cleaned up. She declared the County spent over \$5 million on the Presidential Preference Primary (PPP). She thought the money could have been better spent using paper ballots, holding the election in one day, and using the extra money to clean up the voter rolls. She agreed with Ms. Butcher that the Board should assign and oversee a root-cause analysis regarding reported issues with the SOS database to give the voters trust in elections.

Ms. Victoria Myer spoke about election issues. She wondered what the Board would do about the problems reported with the SOS database. She mentioned the upcoming presidential election. She believed the County should go back to using paper ballots. She discussed other countries that stopped using ballot machines and returned to using paper ballots and hand-counting methods. She asked if the Board realized the consequences and what might happen if the issue was not fixed.

Mr. Carl Copek appreciated the recent implementation of fiber optics in Gerlach.

Ms. Yolanda Knaak opposed giving money to the Lake Tahoe destination committee. Instead of focusing on bringing more people to the area, she thought the Board needed to ensure that those currently residing in the Tahoe area could be evacuated during an emergency. She believed the Board needed to spend money on cleaning the lake. She declared she would send the Board a copy of a notice she received stating that there were microplastics in the Tahoe drinking water.

Ms. Kristina Hill asked the Board not to support the Lake Tahoe Destination Stewardship Plan. She thought the Board should better use tax dollars by supporting groups actively working to improve the quality of Lake Tahoe and the surrounding environment. She read excerpts from a written comment submitted by Ms. Pamela Tsiginos, which Ms. Nichols placed on file with the Clerk during her public comment.

Ms. Betty Bishop stated she was a member of FIANV. She was involved in the Housing Not Harm campaign and wanted to voice opposition to Item 18. She did not support the ordinance because it duplicated similar criminalization ordinances passed by the Cities of Reno and Sparks. She took food to unsheltered people and saw the adverse effects of hostile architecture, locked restrooms, and the removal of barbeque pits. She heard stories of abandonment, loneliness, and despair. She spoke about a recent encounter she had with a woman who described how hungry she often was. She thought the ordinances passed in Reno and Sparks were not effective because the community had not seen a reduction in homelessness. She noted the number of deaths of unhoused residents had increased over the last three years. She asserted Washoe County should use evidence-based approaches and invest in the County's Built for Zero plan.

Mr. William T. Steward spoke about wildfires. He thought access to ingress and egress was essential for citizens and first responders during emergencies. If there were a bottleneck created by citizens trying to get away and first responders trying to get to the

fire, people would be stuck like the Camp Fire in Paradise, California. He opined the Board should work with NV Energy to address tree limbs near power lines. He speculated that insurance companies were changing fire coverage, which would affect people. He believed the regionalization of fire services was essential for local departments to work together with standard policies and procedures. He asserted the public did not care which jurisdiction responded to emergencies as long as someone responded promptly.

Ms. Colleen Crowley spoke in opposition to Item 18. She asserted she did a lot of volunteer work with senior citizens who lived on the edge of homelessness. She declared it could take years for people to get on the list for Section Eight housing. She noted that some people did not have children or families to care for them. She mentioned inviting a young woman who was facing homelessness to live with her. She stated the young woman lived with her for three weeks until they could sort out a more permanent situation for her. She disagreed with the idea of criminalizing people experiencing homelessness.

**11:49 a.m.**    **The Board recessed.**

**12:00 p.m.**    **The Board reconvened with Vice Chair Herman absent.**

**24-0081**        **AGENDA ITEM 5** Announcements/Reports.

Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro said he was standing in for County Manager Eric Brown, who was attending a housing roundtable hosted by Governor Joe Lombardo's office. He spoke about an issue regarding vote history that was reported over the weekend. He assured the Board and the community that the County worked closely with the Secretary of State (SOS) over the weekend to determine why the County's voter file produced incorrect vote history. He noted the problem was identified in several Nevada counties and only affected vote history, which was separate and unrelated to election results. He declared the voting history was correct on the County's website and encouraged residents to verify their vote history there if they had any concerns. He reported the issue was resolved, and with the County's new voter registration and election management system, the problem would not arise in the future. He announced two seats open on the Nevada Local Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council and one open seat on the Washoe County Audit Committee. He stated anyone interested in applying for any open positions could visit the County's website.

Commissioner Clark recalled a request he made at the previous Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting to place an item on that day's agenda about sending a letter to the United States Postal Service (USPS) regarding its potential plans to shut down the Reno branch and route Northern Nevada's mail through Sacramento. He expressed concerns about mail-in ballots, the loss of hundreds of union jobs, and a delay in local mail service if the USPS followed through on that plan. He remarked that Manager Brown relayed to the Board that SOS Cisco Aguilar asked the County to hold off on sending a letter. Chair Hill interjected to note that she discussed Commissioner Clark's request with Manager Brown, and the item could not be placed on that agenda because



agendas had to be posted three business days before the meeting, and February 19, 2024, was a holiday. She said the item might be placed on the February 27, 2024, BCC agenda. Commissioner Clark asserted that the cutoff to send the letter was February 28, 2024. Chair Hill declared the Board was required to follow open meeting law (OML). Commissioner Clark hoped the item would be placed on an agenda.

Commissioner Clark stated he met with Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore three weeks prior and received a memo dated January 12, 2021, that indicated the TMFPD planned to build a new fire station in Washoe Valley. He noted the station had not been built due to delays in the permitting and design process, which were caused by the Commissioner who represented District 2 before him. He remarked that Chief Moore reported the fire station would be significantly more expensive to build now and the TMFPD did not have enough funding to build it. He thought this was an example of mismanagement in the County. He asserted that not having a fire station in Washoe Valley was a public safety issue.

Commissioner Clark mentioned elections and noted he received several phone calls from constituents concerned about mail-in ballots. He recently found a newspaper article from May 24, 2022, regarding issues with the instructions on mail-in ballots; a copy of the article was placed on file with the Clerk. He was tired of mistakes being made when it came to elections. He did not want the public to think the County was incompetent and wanted people to have confidence in elections.

Commissioner Clark read from a letter sent to him by the SOS's Office regarding Vice Chair Herman's proposed Clean Elections resolution. He stated Vice Chair Herman's resolution was studied by the District Attorney's (DA) Office, the Office of the County Manager (OCM), and the SOS. He asserted the SOS did not specifically outline inaccuracies in Vice Chair Herman's resolution, which he thought would have been helpful in understanding why the resolution was rejected. He claimed Vice Chair Herman did not receive the same letter. Chair Hill interjected to inform Commissioner Clark she sent Vice Chair Herman an email that included the letter from the SOS, which Chair Hill placed on file with the Clerk. Commissioner Clark said he asked an attorney to review the letter from the SOS, and they suggested he follow the trail of rejection since Vice Chair Herman was not allowed to. He asked for a clear, transparent account of why the resolution was rejected, including the dates of any correspondence. In accordance with the BCC Rules of Procedure Handbook, specifically outlined in Article 5.5 on page 1, he requested that Vice Chair Herman's resolution, which he adopted as his own, be placed on the agenda for the February 27, 2024, BCC meeting. He opined the resolution was straightforward, and there should be no obstacles to its inclusion on the agenda or its approval by the Board. Its purpose was to ensure the County's compliance with the laws and enhance transparency for the public by introducing an additional layer of accountability. He provided a copy of the resolution, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

Commissioner Andriola spoke about the reported glitch in the voter files. She thought people had lost faith in the election process. She asked ACM Solaro and Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nathan Edwards if they knew the process that led to the

discovery of the glitch in the system, to which ACM Solaro responded no. ADA Edwards stated he did not know the specific process, but he was aware that people reported that upon reviewing the database, it showed they had voted via mail-in ballot when they had not. Commissioner Andriola believed the system should have programming to alert the SOS to issues such as the glitch. She recalled asking if there were any irregularities with the vote during the Board's Canvass. She understood the glitch had not been identified when the Board certified the vote and asked if there were any compliance issues now that the Board was aware of the glitch. ADA Edwards declared that was a question for the Registrar of Voters (ROV). He advised that since the issue came up during public comment, the Board was free to discuss it. He noted the Board could not act on the issue because it was not on the agenda. If the Board decided the information destabilized the action it took to certify the Presidential Preference Primary (PPP) vote, there was a potential the Board could ask for reconsideration at a future meeting. Interim ROV Cari-Ann Burgess asserted she had no concerns with the validity of the vote. Commissioner Andriola asked Ms. Burgess to expand on her response. Ms. Burgess said she and her staff spent ten hours verifying that all information on the County's website was accurate. She remarked the issue arose when transferring the County's information to the SOS because the two databases did not interface clearly. She explained that the County and the SOS planned to implement one seamless system for future votes.

Commissioner Andriola stated she had a strong technology background and understood that systems sometimes did not connect properly. She asked if the information uploaded to the SOS was exactly as presented to the Board when it took action to certify the vote, to which Ms. Burgess responded yes. Commissioner Andriola questioned if the glitch that occurred once the information was sent to the SOS was outside the purview of the County, which Ms. Burgess confirmed. Commissioner Andriola claimed it was not the County's issue that the two databases did not cooperate with each other. The County was only concerned with the results of the vote, which remained intact as presented.

Commissioner Andriola said the ROV planned to hold a mock election on March 11 and 12, 2024. She requested an item be placed on a future agenda for the Board to direct the ROV to allow vendors and the public to participate in that mock election as if it were an actual election. She felt it was essential to have transparency in all election matters. She thought the County was responsible for supporting true, fair, and equitable elections.

ADA Edwards confirmed Commissioner Andriola was requesting an item on an upcoming agenda to provide direction to staff regarding the mock election, to which Commissioner Andriola responded yes.

Commissioner Garcia recalled that on February 14, 2023, the Board heard an item regarding the Washoe County Code of Conduct. She remarked the item was on consent, was briefly discussed by the Board, and it was determined the item should be brought back before the Board at a later date. She requested the Board place the item on an upcoming agenda for consideration.

Commissioner Clark asked that, in the future, Chair Hill allow him to finish giving his remarks before she interjected.

**24-0082**      **AGENDA ITEM 6** Presentation by members of the Tahoe Destination Stewardship Council (Devin Middlebrook, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency; Nettie Pardue, Destination Stewardship Council; Amy Berry, Tahoe Fund) to discuss the new Lake Tahoe Destination Stewardship Council and the County's participation and support of the plan. (All Commission Districts.)

Mr. Devin Middlebrook, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Government Affairs Manager, conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Tahoe Recreation Trends; Decline in Gaming; Travel Pattern Change; Travel Times – Unchanged; We Have Issues; and Moving Toward Destination Stewardship.

Mr. Middlebrook stated the Destination Stewardship Plan (DSP) was related to the better management of Lake Tahoe's recreation and tourism. He declared the DSP was not about attracting new visitors but adequately managing existing visitors and residents. He remarked that with the opening of gaming in California, there was a marked decline in gaming revenue in Tahoe, which altered people's travel patterns throughout the region. He noted those changes caused traffic, congestion, and litter issues, which the DSP intended to overcome. He outlined the process taken by the Tahoe Destination Stewardship Council (TDSC) to get the DSP to its current state.

Mr. Andy Chapman from the Tahoe Fund continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Creating a New Process; Stakeholders; Public Engagement; Resident Survey Results; Visitor Survey Results; A Plan Takes Shape; Lake Tahoe Destination Stewardship Plan; and Shared Vision.

Mr. Chapman stated that when COVID-19 (C19) hit, the TDSC was unprepared for the influx of visitors in the summer of 2020. He said the stakeholders for the DSP could be broken down into four segments: local, regional, state, and federal. He declared stakeholders were previously focused on marketing strategies to draw people to Tahoe, but the focus shifted to management and ensuring responsible travel and impacts on the area. He asserted public engagement was vital to the DSP and provided helpful information to the TDSC. He pointed out that all data provided in the presentation was available on the TDSC website.

Managing Director of the TDSC Nettie Pardue continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Turning the Plan into Reality; Governance – Stewardship Council; Structure and Proposed Action Teams; Immediate Actions – Destination Management; Shared Funding Partners; Washoe County as a Leader; and [stewardshiptahoe.org](http://stewardshiptahoe.org).

Ms. Pardue declared her chief responsibility when she stepped into her role was to build the TDSC. She stated that in December of 2023, the TDSC came together for its first in-person meeting. She noted Tahoe was a complex place, comprised of five counties and two states. She said the creation of the TDSC allowed stakeholders to work collaboratively to protect Lake Tahoe. She asserted the TDSC was working to secure additional funding for more necessary projects. Following its initial meeting, the TDSC developed action teams focused on protecting natural resources in the Tahoe Basin, increasing the Tahoe experience for all users, and demonstrating the economic value of visitors to Tahoe. She explained new bridges and trails were implemented to account for the increase in visitors to the area. She said that stakeholder funding paid for her position, which was tasked with implementing the DSP and specific projects identified by the TDSC. She thanked Washoe County for its leadership and support of various projects.

Chair Hill appreciated Sustainability Manager Brian Beffort, who represented Washoe County on the TDSC. She thanked the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for its efforts to support sustainable tourism in Lake Tahoe.

Commissioner Andriola wondered where the employees had a voice in this plan. Mr. Middlebrook responded that employees played a vital role in this plan. He noted Vail and Palisades were added to the council because they were some of the largest outdoor employers in the region. During the outreach process, employees were encouraged to participate in resident surveys. He added that several of the discussion groups were targeted at local businesses and included business owners and employees. He stated there were Spanish-speaking workshops to ensure the council heard from that population of Tahoe.

Commissioner Andriola asked how long the TDSC had been working on the DSP. Mr. Middlebrook responded that the planning process took about 18 months, and was launched in June of 2023. He noted stakeholders had discussed plans for the DSP since 2016 or 2017. Commissioner Andriola expressed appreciation that employees had a voice in the process. Mr. Chapman added that some discussion groups were specifically targeted to front-line employees.

Commissioner Garcia stated the TDSC dealt with five counties, two states, and several partners. She asked how the TDSC was uniquely positioned to carry out the DSP. Mr. Middlebrook declared that the question was considered when creating the TDSC. He noted that the Environmental Improvement Program was one of the most successful models of collaboration and cross-governmental work in the Tahoe Basin. He said there was consideration of tasking that team with the implementation of the DSP. It was ultimately determined that there needed to be a separate group because the Environmental Improvement Program and the DSP were too extensive of projects to take on simultaneously.

**24-0083**      **AGENDA ITEM 7** Recommendation to acknowledge presentation and possible direction to staff of the Washoe County Financial Outlook for Fiscal Year 2025 and Budget. The overview includes a review of the General Fund's financial results for Fiscal Year 2023, a Mid-Year 2024

review, and economic, revenue and expenditure trends, Board of County Commissioner strategic goals, known cost increases, unquantified/outstanding cost impacts, and a general outlook for Fiscal Year 2025 and Budget. Finance. (All Commission Districts.)

Budget Manager Lori Cooke conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Outlook; FY 2023 General Fund Financial Results; FY 2023 General Fund Financial Results; FY 2024 Year-to-Date Review (2 Slides); FY 2025 Financial Outlook; Economic Outlook; Economic Outlook – US Conference Board; Economic Outlook (2 Slides); Strategic Planning Direction; Financial Outlook – Preliminary; Fund Balance – General Fund; Property Tax – General Fund; Assessed Valuation; Consolidated Tax (2 Slides); FY25 Budget Information – Preliminary; Summary; Next Steps; and Questions/Discussion.

Ms. Cooke reflected on fiscal year (FY) 2023. She noted the use of fund balance, the largest of which was related to Incline Village refund payments. She pointed out that the County was on track and within a normal budgetary range for FY 2024. She said it was important to understand national trends when looking forward to FY 2025. She noted there were some expected issues in the supply chain and investments in robotics. She spoke about the Strategic Planning Workshop the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) held on January 24, 2023.

Ms. Cooke explained the base budget for the upcoming year was always the leftover funds from the prior year. She stated the primary revenues for the general fund came from consolidated tax (c-tax) and property taxes. When taxpayers received their property's assessed valuation notice, abatements were listed to prevent the bill from exceeding the allowed increase of three or eight percent, depending on the property. She pointed out there was currently a flattening trend in c-tax, which impacted taxable sales and distributions. Looking towards FY 2025, she predicted the County would be limited in terms of expansion due to the decrease in revenue from c-tax.

Chair Hill appreciated that Ms. Cooke gave the Board a realistic look at the budget going forward so the Commission could make sustainable choices for the community.

Commissioner Andriola appreciated Ms. Cooke's forwardness regarding the budget projections and looked forward to working with her to develop solutions.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Penny Brock did not think the Board could vote on the item because there was no proposed budget. She claimed the County's tentative budget was scheduled to be sent to the Nevada Department of Taxation on April 15, 2024. She said the FY 2025 budget would be presented to the BCC on April 16, 2024, and a public hearing for final budget adoption was scheduled for May 21, 2024. She alleged counties with comparable populations to Washoe County operated with much smaller budgets and wondered why the County required such a large budget. She discussed

inflation and speculated it was at 20 percent. She spoke about senior citizens and young families struggling to pay property taxes.

No action was taken on this item.

**1:30 p.m.**      **The Board Recessed**

**2:01 p.m.**      **The Board reconvened with Vice Chair Herman absent.**

**24-0084**      **AGENDA ITEM 19**      Public Hearing: Second reading and possible adoption of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code), Article 220 (Tahoe Area), Section 110.220.275 (Wood Creek Regulatory Zone) to add "Schools - Kindergarten through Secondary" use type as a permitted use, subject to a special use permit, on those parcels in size equal to, or greater than, three-acres within the Tahoe - Wood Creek Regulatory Zone; and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto. Virtual Public Comment Eligible. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Ordinance No. 1711, Bill No. 1901.

Commissioner Clark asked what could be done on a property owned by a church and whether the County could regulate activities on church properties. Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nathan Edwards confirmed the County could regulate church properties to the same extent as other properties. He explained that this item was regarding an amendment to the zoning rules to allow the school's type of use within the Wood Creek Regulatory Zone. He clarified that the Board would consider whether the regulatory zone with the described limitations was appropriate for kindergarten through secondary schools. ADA Edwards mentioned the required special use permit (SUP) was a relatively substantial level of oversight on uses to mitigate impacts on surrounding properties. He noted schools impacted surrounding properties, and the SUP was designed to address those circumstances. He indicated the parcels were three acres in size or larger. He added the item was not targeting religious schools.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Teresa Eppolito expressed concern about the impact of Saint Clare's Montessori School on the church, the Wood Creek neighborhood, and the North Lake Tahoe community. Referencing previous meetings, Ms. Eppolito believed the Board only listened to the engineering firm paid for by the Christian schools and the families who attended the private schools. She declared that Saint Clare's Montessori School and the Village Christian Church did not represent most families in Incline Village. She thought the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) and the churches should consider the impact on the entire North Lake Tahoe community. She informed that the Washoe County School District (WCSD) was contemplating closing the

middle school in Incline Village due to the cost of maintaining it with declining enrollment. She believed the addition of two faith-based schools would further exacerbate the problem. She recognized the work of middle school teachers in providing students with a safe place to learn in a welcoming environment. She claimed private schools divided the area based on wealth and intensified the elitist attitude of many Incline Village residents. She asserted there was no need to rezone a neighborhood to accommodate two private schools. She inquired about the frequency of the Board's visits to North Lake Tahoe. She mentioned tuition prices charged by Saint Clare's Montessori School. She asked if the Board had attended any meetings to hear the community's concerns regarding closing public schools in Incline Village.

Mr. James Gentry displayed documents that were placed on file with the Clerk. He disclosed he was a parishioner at Saint Francis Catholic Church and a substitute teacher at Incline Middle School. He expressed concern regarding the local middle school and its students. He talked about the activities at Incline Middle School and commented that the students were engaged and excited. He said he was concerned about the students losing their homes, which they needed to thrive. Mr. Gentry approved of faith-based education and mentioned his son had attended a Catholic school. He supported school choice but voiced concern about the school's location, as it would create more hazardous traffic conditions and provide children with inadequate infrastructure for kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) school attendance. He pointed out that the school zone and infrastructure were already available in Incline Village. He questioned why there was no assistance to maintain the public school while people continued to thrive at faith-based schools. He asserted there was no reason not to take advantage of what was already available. He believed the proposed ordinance and its consequences would be a disservice to all of the students and their involvement in private or public schools. He urged the Board to consider what was being proposed and to allow both sides to compromise on how the community could utilize existing infrastructure. He mentioned parking on Mt. Rose Highway and walking on the ice and snow. He communicated the need for a safe neighborhood and school.

The representative, no name given, of Ms. AnnMarie Lain, the applicant, introduced herself and noted the Board was well-versed in the information about the agenda item.

Ms. Shawn Comstock stated she lived in the Wood Creek Regulatory Zone on Mt. Rose Highway. She expressed displeasure regarding the proposed zoning change. She noted one of the churches expanding its private schools planned to add modular buildings to a crowded parking lot. She informed a signed petition was submitted. She and other members of the public were concerned about increasing traffic hazards due to illegal parking on the Mt. Rose Highway and along the narrow side streets. Ms. Comstock communicated concerns regarding noise pollution and reduced property values resulting from an influx of students, many of whom were non-residents with families that did not pay taxes or support the local public schools. She mentioned other Wood Creek Regulatory Zone residents who opposed the ordinance and endorsed Incline Village's public education

system. Ms. Comstock recounted the TRPA had granted four consecutive six-month operating permits. She spoke about evacuation routes.

Mr. Scott Comstock read from a document that was provided to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. He observed that both churches involved seemed confident that the proposed ordinance would be adopted. He recalled the proposed schools announced that they were expanding enrollments and accepting applications for new students in August 2023. He said they installed signage, released information to the community, and organized a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Mr. Comstock voiced the residents' concerns about the zoning change being treated as a formality or an annoyance. He stated the developers seemed to be disrespecting the process and the agencies involved. He requested that the Board reconsider the rezoning proposal, conduct independent studies, and help the applicants find a location that was adequately zoned for schools. He alleged that DOWL, the planning firm hired by the applicant, did an excellent job at falsely depicting support for the matter.

Ms. Penny Brock recounted speaking on this matter during the previous Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting. She said she was a strong proponent of religious freedom and indicated the matter pertained to the First Amendment of the United States (US) Constitution. She stated the US valued freedom of religion and not freedom from religion. She asserted the State did not have the right to regulate a church's ministry. Ms. Brock noted that those who attended church would know the local government did not grant a license for church practices, such as Sunday morning service and Bible studies. She mentioned that Christian schools were a part of church ministries across the US and noted the schools operated Monday through Friday. She claimed the rezoning request could not be denied because it concerned religious freedom. She discussed the existence of law firms such as the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which was founded to support Christian schools' right to be in church ministries. She spoke about ACLJ founder Jay Sekulow, who she stated had successfully argued before the Supreme Court more than any other attorney in the US for cases related to this item.

Mr. Jeff Ogden urged the Board to approve the Washoe County Code (WCC) amendment to secure the constitutional rights of Washoe County residents to free exercise of religion. He spoke of ideologies practiced in the Christian church. He declared the earliest recorded Christian school was founded in the second century, Anno Domini (A.D.), in Alexandria, Egypt, to educate converts. Mr. Ogden claimed that all of Europe's historic universities were originally Christian schools. He noted Presbyterian individuals continued the tradition of establishing Christian schools at the time of the Reformation in 1559. Furthermore, Presbyterian and Catholic individuals founded schools in the US before its establishment. He stated Princeton University was one of the oldest colleges in the US and was founded as a Presbyterian school. Mr. Ogden asserted establishing and operating faith-based schools was a vital and historic part of Christianity. He noted there were approximately 23,000 religious schools in the US; however, no Christian schools were located in Incline Village. He pointed out the First Amendment guaranteed the right to exercise one's religion freely and requested that the Commissioners vote in favor of the WCC amendment.



Mr. Tim Gilbert thanked the Board for all the work it accomplished. He indicated he was an elder at The Village Church and one of the applicants. He stated The Village Church intended to teach children about Jesus Christ and assured the proposed ordinance was not negatively targeting public schools.

Mr. Don Ferrell clarified The Village Church planned to operate only through elementary school, not middle school. He informed that The Village Church had a preschool at its site for over 25 years and admitted 30 children, although there was a waitlist comprised of 80 families. He noted there was a shortage of preschools, and The Village Church was planning to expand its preschools as a factor of the proposed WCC amendment and as a service to the community. Mr. Ferrell said raising children in a faith-based foundation was essential or centrally important to many parents, which several parents spoke about during previous BCC meetings. He noted public schools were prohibited from providing faith-based education by law, so many of the parents who were interested in The Village Church and the Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church would not enroll their children in public schools regardless. Furthermore, the parents often located homeschooling groups or homeschooled their children to provide a faith-based foundation independently. Mr. Ferrell declared The Village Church was proposing to serve those families. He stated the Saint Patrick's Episcopal Church and The Village Church intended to provide their facilities, free of rent, to parents as an act of community service. Additionally, The Village Church's tuition was less than a third of that of the local private school. He indicated The Village Church was trying to make its services available and would offer scholarship programs to everyone who wished to attend. Mr. Ferrell mentioned no other location for The Village Church would be financially feasible because the facilities already existed, and the church could not afford to build or rent them. The churches involved wished to offer their services to the community. He echoed information relayed during Mr. Ogden's public comment. He added that people who wanted to enroll their children in a Christian school would need to travel to Reno. He asserted the zoning change was essential for the churches to serve the Incline Village area. Mr. Ferrell urged the Commissioners to comply with the Planning Commission's (PC) recommendation.

Mr. Peter Larson introduced himself as a resident of Incline Village and a teacher at Saint Clare's Montessori School. He indicated a long precedent of Catholic schools being a part of a Catholic church in the same building. He communicated the importance of the school operating in the same building where its faith was being taught. He noted no area was zoned for Saint Clare's Montessori School and stated it would not relocate even if there were. Mr. Larson assured Saint Clare's Montessori School had no animosity toward the neighbors and wished to continue its dialogue with everyone in the community. He said it was essential for Saint Clare's Montessori School to maintain a positive relationship with the community. He believed there was an opportunity for beneficial dialogue.

Ms. Megan Chillemi indicated she was a North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council (NTRAC) member. She communicated the importance of maintaining the appeal of North Shore for young families, which included such factors as a variety of housing, a sustainable economy, and schools of choice. She said the North Shore area's population

was declining. Ms. Chillemi added the Development Code Amendment (DCA) had already been approved by the TRPA and Washoe County's Planning Commission. She encouraged the Board to approve the item.

Ms. Debra Larson spoke about parking along Mt. Rose Highway. She opined parking would not be an issue if the item was approved because schools were in session during the week, and the area was usually only busy on the weekends. She did not think this item would impact public schools in the area, as Saint Clare's Montessori School had been operational for two years with minimal impact on Incline Village's public school system.

Ms. Monique Hurdle expressed support for the item. She declared education and mentorship made the most significant impact on schooling. She opined Saint Clare's Montessori School positively impacted the community. She supported this zoning change and claimed it would benefit Incline Village and the County.

Mr. Charles Dowd believed the item's approval would support the long-term health of the Incline Village community. He declared that families needed alternative channels of education for their children and that homeschooling was not the correct solution for some families. He asserted that the public school curriculum was not under attack, but he believed a faith-based education should be a right for families to choose. He did not want Incline Village to become a wealthy retirement community because he thought it was a much more vibrant place than that.

Ms. Susan Maturlo asked the Board to approve the item. She thought parents should have a choice of where to send their children to school. She was concerned that many homeschooled children received inadequate education from their parents. She asserted parents had the right to choose a religious education for their children. She stated Incline Village had many older, wealthy people in the community. She claimed people in disagreement with this item believed in families having the right to access religious education, but they did not want schools in their neighborhood. She declared she did not want to live in a town where people thought like that. She wanted Incline Village to be an open, diverse place.

Ms. Patricia Moser Morris spoke in approval of the item. She noted that public education regularly ranked 49 or 50 in the nation. She believed the competition of private schools would incentivize public schools to improve. She asserted that all children deserved an education that would prepare them to succeed. She thought the proposed amendment would allow other religious schools to come to the area. She thanked the Board for its consideration.

Ms. Kristin Flynn remarked she was previously a public school teacher who recently started teaching at The Village Christian Preschool. She recalled when her child was young and struggling in public school, there were no alternative options in Incline Village unless her family had the means to commute two hours to Reno, which it did not.

She thought providing families with alternative education options was vital to the community.

Ms. Gia Rauenhorst thanked the Board for its consideration of this item. She spoke about what school choice meant to parents and the academic and character development her son enjoyed as a student at Saint Clare’s Montessori School. She believed options for religious education made the community stronger. She opined religious schools allowed children to engage in church and school life joyfully, and inspired people to be more community-minded. She asked the Board to support the item.

Ms. Yolanda Knaak expressed support for the item. She stated Nevada public schools were at the bottom of the national education ranking. She declared there were no other affordable locations in Incline Village for religious-based schools to relocate to. She did not think the schools would affect the Incline Village evacuation plan because more than 120 people attended each church on Sunday mornings, and the evacuation plans did not vary by day of the week.

Ms. Andrea Riggio stated her son attended Saint Clare’s Montessori School, which she opined had been remarkable for her family. She pointed out the school had 50 students, so it did not create undue noise in the community. She noted there were no other preschool options in Incline Village, so the program was essential for her family.

County Clerk Jan Galassini stated she received one emailed comment, which she placed on the record.

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Ordinance No. 1711, Bill No. 1901, be adopted, approved, and published in accordance with NRS 244.100.

**24-0085**      **AGENDA ITEM 20** Public Hearing: Second reading, and adoption of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code (“WCC”) Chapter 45 by modifying: 1) the definition of “child care” found in WCC 45.010(5) to mirror the definition of “child care facility” found in Nevada Revised Statutes (“NRS”) 432A.024; 2) the definition of “division director” and selection process thereof in WCC 45.010(4) and WCC 45.020(2)(b), respectively; and 3) the composition of the Washoe County Human Services Agency (“WCHSA”) in WCC 45.020(1) to reflect the addition of new divisions within WCHSA. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Ordinance No. 1712, Bill No. 1902.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Ordinance No. 1712, Bill No. 1902, be adopted, approved, and published in accordance with NRS 244.100.

### **DONATIONS**

- 24-0086**      **8A1** Recommendation to accept donations totaling \$21,103.39: [\$233.00 from Galena Creek Iron Rangers]; [\$8,407.00 Lazy 5 Summer Music Series concert raffle sales]; [\$316.00 from Galena Campfire program]; [\$328.00 cash donations from various individuals]; [\$1,521.36 for park benches at Rancho San Rafael]; [\$300.00 for Bowers Mansion]; [\$261.07 from the donation drop box at the May Museum]; [\$642.96 from May Foundation for conference reimbursement for staff development]; [\$9,094.00 to the Arboretum for tree, bench and general maintenance and support]; and accept in-kind donations from May Arboretum Society [valued at \$80,948.32] for Regional Parks and Open Space programs and facilities; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the appropriate budget amendments. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0087**      **8B1** Recommendation to accept a one-time equipment donation of [20] Preliminary Breath Test (PBTs) valued at \$6,823.28 from the Northern Nevada DUI Task Force to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office to be placed in all patrol vehicles and used to assist in detecting impaired drivers and reducing DUI related accidents. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0088**      **8B2** Recommendation to accept a one-time food donation of [\$300.00] from the Silver Sage Foundation to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office, so this foundation can provide a shared meal (Not to exceed \$300) with members to foster community relationships. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0089**      **8B3** Accept a donation of a K-9 dog (Otto), equipment, handler training, and travel costs valued at [\$31,374.98] from Washoe County K9 Partners to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office K9 Unit. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0090**      **8B4** Accept a donation of a K-9 dog (Bodie), equipment, handler training, and travel costs valued at [\$31,374.98] from Washoe County K9 Partners to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office K9 Unit. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Items 8A1 through 8B4 be approved.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 9A1 THROUGH 9J1**

- 24-0091**      **9A1** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Communications, Monthly Statements/Reports, and Quarterly Statements/Reports. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0092**      **9B1** Recommendation to authorize a subgrant agreement for an academic evaluation of the Support in Treatment, Accountability and Recovery (STAR) program between Washoe County Department of Alternative Sentencing and the Board of Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), obo the University of Nevada, Reno; project to be managed by the Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies (CASAT); UNR to be paid an amount not to exceed [\$205,520.00] over the four-year grant period retroactive to October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2027; and approve Resolution necessary for same. Alternative Sentencing. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0093**      **9C1** Recommendation to: 1) approve Fiscal Year 2025 Street and Highway Projects Interlocal Cooperative Agreement between Washoe County, the City of Reno, and the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC); and 2) approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Street and Highway Projects Interlocal Cooperative Agreement between Washoe County, the City of Sparks, and the RTC; for the RTC Fiscal Year 2025 Program of Projects that were identified and approved in the RTC Fiscal Year 2025 Regional Transportation Plan Update. The agreements identify regional roadway projects and priorities with construction project estimates of \$138 million determined by RTC and funding sources. Washoe County is the pass-through agency with associated fiscal costs under the Interlocal Cooperative Agreements. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0094**      **9D1** Recommendation to Acknowledge Receipt of the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). Finance. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0095**      **9E1** Recommendation to accept renewed funding for a Deputy District Attorney for the provision of continuing prosecutor services related to the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Task Force in the amount of [\$125,000 no match] from the Office of National Drug Control Policy award to Nevada HIDTA for the retroactive period of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023, with remaining \$47,000 position cost covered

by District Attorney General Fund budget, direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments, and retroactively authorize the District Attorney or his designees to sign the grant agreement. District Attorney. (All Commission Districts.)

**24-0096**      **9F1** Recommendation to acknowledge the amended grant award of \$3,057.00 [total award increased from \$41,479.00 to \$44,536.00], County match of 10% required, awarded to the Washoe County Law Library, Second Judicial District Court, by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records awarded on January 8, 2024, and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. District Court. (All Commission Districts.)

**24-0097**      **9G1** add agenda subject. Recommendation to accept a FFY24 Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) subaward from the State of Nevada, Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) in the amount of [\$105,915.00; no county match] retroactive from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024 to supplement food costs for the Older Americans Act Title III congregate and home-delivered meal programs which address the food and nutrition needs of seniors, retroactively authorize the Director of Human Services Agency to execute the subgrant award and related documents, and direct the Comptroller's Office make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

**24-0098**      **9G2** Recommendation to approve the first amendment to the subaward of the Child Welfare Collaborative Agreement with Casey Family Programs in the amount of [\$75,000.00; no county match] retroactive from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, to facilitate family reunification and permanency for children and reduce foster care reentries; and authorize the Director of Human Services Agency to retroactively execute agreement documents; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

**24-0099**      **9H1** Recommendation to approve a FY 2024 Nevada State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant for [\$8,990.00, no County match required]. The HMEP grant is intended to provide for planning and training to prevent, mitigate and respond to hazardous materials incidents. Grant term is retroactive from January 10, 2024 - September 30, 2024. If approved, authorize the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Chair to execute grant documents and authorize the County Manager or his designee, to sign the Washoe County Sub-Grant Agreement between Washoe County and the Reno Fire Department (RFD) on behalf of TRIAD Hazmat Team per NRS 244.1505, in the amount of [\$8,990.00] to conduct a Department of Transportation (DOT) 406 Tanker Rollover Response course which

includes the vendor fees: approve Resolution necessary for the same; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the appropriate budget amendments. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

- 24-0100**      **9I1** Recommendation to accept a Justice Assistance Grant award [amount not to exceed \$41,165.00, no County match required] as administered through the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety Office, Office of Criminal Justice Assistance, to cover the cost of an inspection camera system and monitor Consolidated Bomb Squad, Special Operations Division, for the retroactive grant period of January 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024, and if approved, direct Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0101**      **9I2** Recommendation to accept a Justice Assistance Grant award [amount not to exceed \$28,240.00, no County match required] as administered through the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety Office, Office of Criminal Justice Assistance, to cover the cost of equipment for the Special Weapons and Tactics Team, Special Operations Division, for the retroactive grant period of January 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024 and if approved, direct Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0102**      **9I3** Recommendation to approve the 2020 Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) funding from the Nevada Department of Public Safety, Office of Criminal Justice Administration. [amount not to exceed \$37,396.00 county match of \$12,465.00 required] to be used for programmatic supplies, curriculum, contracted behavioral health specialist, overtime and training/travel costs for the retroactive period of November 28, 2023, to September 30, 2024 and direct Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0103**      **9I4** Recommendation to approve the Internet Crimes Against Children Interlocal Contract and accept grant funds [amount not to exceed \$79,020.00, no County match required] as administered through the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office for reimbursement of expenses associated with Internet Crimes Against Children investigations and Law Enforcement related county and non-county personnel training and travel, for the retroactive grant period of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024, and if approved, direct Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 24-0104**      **9J1** Recommendation to accept Treasurer's status report for the period ending January, 2024, of payment of refunds and interest since last update in the amount of \$22,525.41 on certain property tax overpayments for residential properties at Incline Village/Crystal Bay, in compliance with the

October 21, 2019 Order issued by the District Court in Village League to Save Incline Assets, Inc., et.al. vs. State of Nevada, et.al., Case No. CV03-06922, as modified and clarified by the settlement agreement regarding the processing of refunds. Treasurer. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Regarding Agenda Item 9B1, Commissioner Garcia disclosed she was an employee of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). She clarified she had no professional or pecuniary interest in the academic evaluation of the Support in Treatment, Accountability and Recovery (STAR) program.

Chair Hill referenced Agenda Item 9D1 and complimented Finance Department Budget Manager Lori Cooke's presentation for Agenda Item 7. She acknowledged Washoe County's receipt of the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). She praised the County's budget team and expressed appreciation for the leadership and guidance from the finance staff.

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 9A1 through 9J1 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 9A1 through 9J1 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

### **BLOCK VOTE – 12 THROUGH 16**

**24-0105**      **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to acknowledge receipt of the Interim Financial Report for Washoe County Governmental Funds for the Six Months Ended December 31, 2023 recognizing a total funds balance increase of \$52 million year-to-date and \$17 million year over year. This unaudited interim financial report is provided quarterly, in addition to the audited annual comprehensive financial report, to provide information on Washoe County's primary operating fund and accounts and identify significant variances between the years. - Unaudited Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)

On the call for public comment, Ms. Penny Brock referenced Agenda Item 12 and questioned if the total funds balance increase was in addition to the \$1.6 billion budget. She wondered how a proposed increase could be possible and expressed concern regarding the budget's management.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be acknowledged.



**24-0106**      **AGENDA ITEM 13** Recommendation to accept a supplemental subgrant award from the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division for the Older Americans Act Title III Program for Home Delivered Meals [\$583,786.00; \$87,568.00 county match] retroactively from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024; authorize the Director of the Human Services Agency to execute the grant award documents retroactively; and direct the Comptroller to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 12 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be accepted, authorized, and directed.

**24-0107**      **AGENDA ITEM 14** Recommendation to approve Amendment #1 to the Interlocal Contract between the Department of Health and Human Services (Division of Health Care Financing and Policy) and the County of Washoe (Juvenile Services) to authorize Juvenile Services to accept Targeted Case Management reimbursements from Nevada Medicaid for all allowable services. Amendment #1 increases reimbursements in an amount not to exceed \$2,077,339.55 from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2027. Juvenile Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 12 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 14 be approved and authorized.

**24-0108**      **AGENDA ITEM 15** Recommendation to approve a Telecommunications Service Agreement between Washoe County and Digital Technology Solutions, Inc. (DTS), for the installation of fiber backbone from DTS's Gerlach Communication Center located at 180 Del Ora Avenue, Unit B, Gerlach, Nevada to street poles in Gerlach and Empire, Nevada, as well as to residential properties in Gerlach and Empire, Nevada, with installation to be performed during Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, in an amount [not to exceed \$724,720.53]; and direct the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the Agreement. As part of the Agreement, Washoe County shall receive a 50% discount on previously contracted DTS business services for Washoe County Community Facilities located in Gerlach (fire station & community center, Sheriff's Office, Roads) for a term of sixty (60) months. It is further recommended that should Washoe County Technology Services staff wish to extend the initial 60-month term for an additional 60-months

at a 20% discount on then-current market rates for DTS business services, through a written addendum to the Agreement, the Board authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute such an addendum. Technology Services. (Commission District 5.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 12 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 15 be approved, directed, and authorized.

**24-0109**      **AGENDA ITEM 16** Recommendation to approve the reimbursement of costs incurred by the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, and Washoe County for expenses related to and in support of the Enhanced 911 Emergency Response System and portable event recording devices, as recommended by the 911 Emergency Response Advisory Committee on July 20, 2023, August 31, 2023, September 21, 2023, November 30, 2023, and January 18, 2024, in an amount not to exceed [\$1,299,460.50] as specified within the adopted Enhanced 911 Fund's operating budget. Technology Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Public comment for each item in the Block Vote was held concurrently; see Agenda Item 12 for the public comment relevant to this item.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 16 be approved.

**24-0110**      **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to award Washoe County Bid No. 3231-24 and approve the Agreement for Services to provide custodial services to low security buildings to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder, [staff recommends Qual-Econ, LLC., in the amount not to exceed \$27,625.00 per month]; and authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute a three year agreement effective March 1, 2024 through January 31, 2027, with two additional one year renewal options on behalf of Washoe County [estimated annual value \$331,500.00 plus cost for call-back services]. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Clark wanted to discuss Items 10 and 11 concurrently, as he had the same concerns for both items. Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nathan Edwards stated that was acceptable.

Commissioner Clark wanted to ensure there were no future issues with janitorial services. He wondered if the County could monitor the services closely. He suggested department heads provide a report every six months on the quality of the services

offered by Qual-Econ, LLC. He also wanted to ensure the County's employees were happy with the custodial services being provided. He recalled previous complaints regarding the quality of services performed by Qual-Econ, LLC.

Operations Division Director of the Community Services Department, Eric Crump, stated there were plans to conduct monthly inspections of various County facilities. He noted there was also a reporting system for issues. He performed brief weekly check-ins and larger monthly check-ins with the vendor due to the number of County buildings it serviced. He said the vendor implemented a reporting tool where it could provide status updates on service requests. He was optimistic about the changes made and assured the Board there were systems in place to ensure Qual-Econ, LLC was performing its contracted services.

Commissioner Clark asked if there was an option to receive feedback from the employees who worked at the buildings serviced by the vendor. Mr. Crump responded that throughout every County facility, there were representatives from all departments and programs who had access to a work order system where they could submit requests and receive updates for services. He thought the right systems were in place to ensure there were plenty of avenues for people to provide feedback and service requests.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be awarded, approved, and authorized.

**24-0111**      **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to award Washoe County Bid No. 3224-24 and approve the Agreement for Services to provide custodial services to high security buildings to one responsive, responsible bidder, [staff recommends Qual-Econ, LLC., in the amount of \$87,821.00 per month]; and authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute a three year agreement on behalf of Washoe County effective March 1, 2024 through February 28, 2027, with two additional one-year renewal options [estimated annual value \$1,053,852.00 plus cost for call-back and Porter services]. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Herman being absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be awarded, approved, and authorized.

**24-0112**      **AGENDA ITEM 17** Recommendation to acknowledge and consider the Business Impact Statement (BIS) pursuant to NRS 237 and to introduce and conduct the first reading of an ordinance amending Ordinance 1615, Washoe County's Requirements and Schedule of Rates and Charges for

Sanitary Sewer Service, to amend connection fees within all service areas; and other matters properly relating thereto; and if approved, set a Public Hearing for the second reading and possible adoption on March 19, 2024. The Sanitary Sewer Connection Privilege Fee Charges (Connection Charges) will increase from \$5,900.00 per equivalent residential unit (ERU) to \$9,477.00 per ERU; the Connection Fee for each Additional Fixture Unit will increase from \$320.00 to \$379.00; and increases to the Connection Charge and the Additional Fixture Unit will change from a \$50.00 annual increase to the Engineering News Record Construction Cost Index (ENR-CCI). Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Bill No. 1903.

Division Director of Engineering and Capital Projects Dwayne Smith recalled his presentation to the Board on November 19, 2023, regarding a comprehensive utility rate study. He declared that per the Nevada Revised Statute (NRS), a BIS was required to increase connection fees. He asserted that 499 notifications were sent out to the developers and members of the public that would be affected by the increase. The County placed a notice in the *Reno Gazette-Journal* (RGJ), and staff attended several meetings with developers. He pointed out that if connection fees were not raised, the County could not build the capital or infrastructure necessary to treat additional flows coming into facilities. He noted staff received one email from a local contractor who was concerned about raising the fees and another email from the Washoe County School District (WCSD) recognizing the value of raising the fees.

Mr. Smith declared that this item was to acknowledge the BIS. He reviewed the next steps, which included approving the rate increase via ordinance. He expressed a desire to combine the County's sewer utility ordinance and its reclaimed water ordinance, creating efficiencies that would allow staff to better manage associated costs. He planned to execute a similar process to this item for reclaimed water fees and would bring a proposal for a combined ordinance to the Board at the end of the summer.

Commissioner Clark noted the item would result in a significant fee increase. He thought builders would not subsidize the fee increase, and it would ultimately affect home buyers and renters. He wondered if this item was detrimental to affordable housing initiatives. He asked if current treatment plant users paid their fair share or if rates should be increased for existing property owners and future connections. Mr. Smith responded that the chief goal of staff, through this process, was to avoid user rate increases. He asserted users did not pay connection fees. Connection fees were paid by developers who were essentially purchasing capacity within treatment facilities so their new development could send its sewer flows to the treatment plant. Operational fees were not being raised, which would subsequently impact the users. He declared the approval of this increase would allow the County to be sustainable and resilient for infrastructure costs so it could continue to expand facilities to prepare for increased flows to the treatment center.

Commissioner Clark opined that increased connection fees would lead to increased rent prices. He asked if it was possible to increase user fees if connection fees were insufficient to build new facilities. Mr. Smith responded that operating fees paid by users were not used for capital facility improvements.

Commissioner Andriola appreciated this process could be done without increasing fees for existing users.

Commissioner Garcia thought merging the sewer utility and reclaimed water ordinances was a good idea. She stated there was a table in the Staff Report that projected fiscal year (FY) 2024 through FY 2028 costs. She asked for clarification about those projections and how the total revenues were calculated. Mr. Smith said those fees were based on the Construction Cost Index (CCI), which was calculated by the Engineering News-Record (ENR). He said ENR is a nationwide standard used to determine construction-related costs. He noted the table reflected projected connection fee increases. Actual connection fee increases would be determined annually by averaging fees from the previous year.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Penny Brock thought the fee increase was high and expressed concern that it would affect future and existing homeowners.

Mr. Roger Edwards opined the fee increase was outrageous. He speculated that the increase would prevent future developments and was unjustified and unreasonable. He mentioned the housing crisis in Washoe County and alleged that this item would worsen the issue. He noted that the fee would be placed on each unit in a development, resulting in several millions of dollars in connection fees.

Commissioner Andriola asked Mr. Smith if he could provide comparable connection fees for nearby areas. Mr. Smith responded that he had information on the City of Reno's most recent connection fees. He noted the City's connection fee for single-family residences increased to \$12,407. He clarified that people living in existing homes would not be affected by the increase as the developer already paid their connection fee when the residence was constructed.

Chair Hill asked when the County last implemented a connection fee increase. Mr. Smith stated there had not been a formal increase for nearly 20 years. The County did increase connection fees by \$50 per year, as written into the sewer connection ordinance, which had helped keep facilities sustainable.

Bill No. 1903 was introduced by Commissioner Andriola, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

**24-0113**      **AGENDA ITEM 18** Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code (WCC) Chapter 50 (Public Peace, Safety and Morals) and Chapter 70 (Vehicles and Traffic) by adding new sections regarding: camping on County-owned properties or public places within

1000 feet of the Truckee River (50.400); use of fires, blow torches, and/or propane tanks (50.500); parking of oversized vehicles on public property (70.391); obstructive uses of public sidewalks, roads, and/or highways prohibited (70.392); ride solicitation and contribution from driver/occupant of vehicle prohibited (70.393); human habitation of vehicles on County-owned properties or public places (70.411); and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto; and if supported, set a public hearing for the second reading and possible adoption of the ordinance on March 12, 2024. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Bill No. 1904.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Corey Solferino declared the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) was entrusted with balancing resources to maintain the public's safety, order, and health. He remarked the ordinance was designed to fill a gap in services. He pointed out that Washoe County was the only local jurisdiction that did not have an ordinance similar to this one, resulting in the displacement of the County's unhoused population, which pushed them outside the Reno and Sparks corridors towards the End of the World Camps located towards Verdi and east of Sparks along the Truckee River. Such movement strained vulnerable populations because they were farther away from services and shelter. He reported the WCSO commonly received calls because someone staying at the End of the World Camp fell into the Truckee River during inclement weather or was hit by a train. He opined those were incidences few people survived. He indicated the WCSO held a series of stakeholder meetings regarding the ordinance. He noted that the ordinance closely mirrored ordinances in the Cities of Reno and Sparks and thought it allowed for consistency in enforcement. He shared statistics on outreach performed throughout the County. He said that he recently switched from working in the WCSO's operations bureau to its detention bureau. He claimed some individuals committed high-level misdemeanors because they knew doing so would grant them access to programs, medical assistance, shelter, and food once incarcerated. He asserted this ordinance did not intend for incarceration to be a common solution for people.

Deputy Chief Solferino explained the WCSO created a host of programs to help combat issues with homelessness. He mentioned the Detention Services Unit (DSU) implemented discharge planning, including medication assistance programs. He pointed out that while not all people experiencing homelessness experienced mental health episodes or suffered from addiction, there was a significant correlation between homelessness and behavioral health issues. He spoke about the WCSO's Mobile Outreach Safety Team (MOST), which was made up of patrol officers and clinical social workers who responded to specific calls in the community. He referenced a survey by the WCSO in 2021 and remarked that 44 percent of respondents expressed a desire for the WCSO to address issues with homelessness and homeless encampments. He noted this ordinance would be a living document that could be updated and adapted over time. He discussed concerns regarding warming fires and said the Sparks Police Department (SPD) reported responding to over 120 calls about warming fires. He declared warming fires could destroy and damage the local community.

Deputy Chief Solferino spoke about the Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) Team, which responded to calls for service in the community involving the unhoused population. He declared the HOPE Team had housed over 150 individuals and made over 1,000 contacts, with over 900 of those contacts accepting services. He stated this ordinance would affect the 100 individuals who refused services when the HOPE Team made contact. He pointed out that the HOPE Team had issued zero citations in the past year. He asserted a significant goal of this ordinance was deflection rather than diversion. The WCSO did not want to place people in the criminal justice system; it wanted to connect people with necessary resources. In one year, there were six arrests of unhoused individuals for felony warrants and crimes of arson where damage to property or people occurred. He reported over 51 individuals were connected to services and placed in housing. He mentioned an initiative started in the fall of 2023 to work with the unhoused population to take them to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to get them proper identification.

Deputy Chief Solferino said the HOPE Team and Sheriff Darin Balaam worked with the Cities of Reno and Sparks to discuss co-locating response strategies for vulnerable populations. He reported a lack of service providers in the community, so the HOPE Team often had to be creative in connecting people with services. He stated the program was constantly evolving. He noted that the HOPE Team used to operate under the WCSO's Operations Division and was recently moved to the detention bureau to connect individuals leaving incarceration with needed programming. He declared the HOPE Team worked closely with the MOST Team because both teams regularly worked with the same individuals.

Chair Hill requested clarification on the need for the ordinance, given the excellent work already being done by WCSO. She mentioned she attended a ride-along with Lieutenant Shatawna Daniel and witnessed the incredible work performed by the HOPE Team. Deputy Chief Solferino stated the WCSO could use this ordinance as a deterrent. He remarked the ordinance language was carefully considered and crafted with the help of stakeholders. He declared the ordinance created a process to document encounters and push people toward services while mitigating the number of incarcerations. He noted people often questioned why the ordinance could result in people incurring misdemeanors instead of civil infractions. He explained civil infractions were created by the Legislature to address traffic laws. He opined Reno Municipal Court Judge Christopher Hazlett-Stevens was a fantastic person who had traveled the nation learning ways to provide services and resources to the unhoused population. He asserted the WCSO wanted to provide a conduit where officers could cite people to go to community court, and not be incarcerated. He reported the WCSO was discussing forming a forensic mental health medical unit and was recently awarded a grant from the State of Nevada for a jail-based competency program to provide people with the conduits to succeed in their pathways out of incarceration. He outlined the process officers would follow when contacting members of the unhoused community. If an individual refused services during the first call, the officer would issue a verbal warning. In the event of a second call in 12 months, a case manager would respond with the officer, and a written warning would be issued to the individual if they still refused services. For the third call about an individual in 12 months,

the individual would receive a written citation if they continued refusing services. The fourth response to a call in 12 months would result in an arrest. He maintained that the WCSO was not seeking incarceration; it wanted to use the ordinance to connect service-resistant individuals to essential programs.

Commissioner Clark thought the WCSO already had a lot of tools to mitigate issues with the unhoused community. He wanted to know if all the current laws were being enforced and if all current tools were being exhausted before the Board approved this ordinance. He spoke about a recent incident where he and Mr. Tom Green were trespassed from the Cares Campus. He reported seeing people lying on sidewalks, being intoxicated, and performing bodily functions in public and wondered why laws were not being enforced. He claimed business owners dealt with many issues due to the Cares Campus being constructed near their businesses. He asked about the costs associated with incarcerating people. He questioned if the railroad police should get involved due to people trespassing on railroad property. Deputy Chief Solferino responded the law limited what he could do about misdemeanors not committed in the presence of an officer. He declared this ordinance was necessary because it would be enforceable while officers were conducting outreach and would bring continuity across the jurisdictions of the County and the Cities of Reno and Sparks.

Commissioner Clark understood that officers could not enforce crimes they did not witness, and said it was unlikely people would commit crimes in front of police officers. He wondered if it would be cheaper for the WCSO to increase officer visibility in some regions of the County. He thought crimes would be less likely to happen if more officers were present. Deputy Chief Solferino asserted that getting more officers on the street would take a multi-collaborative approach. He stated the WCSO did not want to arrest its way out of the problem, and that was not what was presented in this ordinance. He declared the goal of this ordinance was to push people toward resources that ultimately ended in them having access to housing and long-term solutions. He believed it would provide a pathway to intervene without arresting people.

Commissioner Clark wondered if increased officer visibility would lead to fewer arrests because people would be deterred from committing crimes. He asserted the businesses on Fourth Street were suffering. Deputy Chief Solferino did not think the solution was throwing more officers at the problem. He opined a community-centered approach with stakeholders from all entities was necessary. He said he was commonly asked why law enforcement was tasked with this project. He stated it was because law enforcement officers were the ones responding to calls regarding unhoused individuals. He shared that in his new role in the detention bureau, he often saw people commit crimes to become incarcerated so they could be connected with the wraparound services provided while in jail, only to end up right back where they left off upon release. He thought this ordinance could stop such things from happening.

Commissioner Garcia mentioned there were many geographical differences throughout Washoe County. She stated she attended a ride-along with Lieutenant Daniel and the HOPE Team. She asked for an update on where incidents with the unhoused



community occurred in the unincorporated parts of the County. Deputy Chief Solferino remarked that the End of the World Camp continued to grow towards USA Parkway, which further displaced service-resistant individuals. He thought the most challenging aspect of his position was bringing people back to town to connect them to resources. He declared winter made it hard to conduct outreach to those far away from the community.

Commissioner Garcia stated that over the last few months, homeless encampments had grown largely in Districts 3, 4, and 5. She wondered if there were growing camps in Districts 1 and 2. Deputy Chief Solferino reported there was a large homeless camp pushing into Veteran's Parkway and the wetlands in that area. He remarked that the WCSO recently worked with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) to secure the waterway from large numbers of people and trash that would otherwise be devastating to the wetlands. He noted there were people from California who were displaced during fires, with whom the HOPE Team worked to connect to services.

Chair Hill thought it would be helpful if Deputy Chief Solferino could collect data on how the Cities of Sparks and Reno were doing with the implementation of their ordinances so the Board could understand the impacts on the community and the court system.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Chasity Martinez stated she was a community organizer with Faith In Action Nevada (FIANV). She remarked that the FIANV leaders followed this ordinance through its Housing Not Harm campaign and had concerns. She believed a broad anti-camping ordinance was not the solution to address a select few service-resistant individuals. She disagreed with the idea of threatening a criminal penalty to push people into services. She asked the Board to consider if the ordinance aligned with the County's Built for Zero Campaign and if there were adequate services to meet the community's needs. She thought there should be more input from people the ordinance would impact. She asked the Board to use evidence-based approaches and invest more in mental health resources and permanent housing options rather than passing a policy that could leave the door open for possible incarceration. She did not think people should be treated like criminals if they had no other option than to sleep in their vehicles and were not harming themselves or others. She opined the ordinance was a step in the wrong direction and urged the Board to deny it.

Mr. Paul Lenart was not present when called to speak.

Ms. Aspen Murillo recalled that Deputy Chief Solferino said the city ordinances pushed people out, making it harder to connect them to resources. She did not understand how this ordinance would not push people out past the County's jurisdiction. The ordinance did not list how the WCSO planned to get people back to the community to connect them with resources or what those resources were. She worked with victims of domestic violence and declared housing was a massive issue for them. She stated there were insufficient resources between low-income housing, Our Place, and the Cares Campus, as they were overused and underfunded. She remarked there was a discussion about programs available to inmates and wondered if there were similar resources people

could access outside of jail. She claimed Washoe County had high barriers for people to access treatments. She asked how the three-person HOPE Team could cover shifts and whether it was operational 24 hours per day. She alleged the ordinance criminalized survival tactics and did not address how the WCSO planned to connect people to resources.

Mr. Prince Saruhan did not understand why the WCSO was being used to connect vulnerable populations to resources. He thought people in the unhoused community were spoken of as a nuisance and disagreed with creating laws for service-resistant people. He believed this ordinance would allow the WCSO to harass people and did not think services should be provided to people through law enforcement.

Ms. Jamie Holloway Neufeld opined it was unfair to incarcerate people for being homeless. She wondered if someone would be considered homeless if they were pulled over with a blanket in their car. She did not think the ordinance was fair to anyone.

Ms. Hue Trong stated she worked with FIANV and talked to many unhoused people. She declared they were human beings just like everyone else. She said when public restrooms were locked up, people had to go to the bathroom where they could. She thought people would litter if they had nowhere to put their trash. She mentioned that she helped people experiencing homelessness register to vote. She believed if enough unhoused people voted, there might be some changes. She shared she recently lost her mother and regularly slept in her car because she had a hard time driving home. She felt that being cited or arrested for doing so would put her on a negative path despite being a functioning member of society. She opined the County should focus on mental health and housing access.

Mr. Gerry Lee Drew declared he was an Army combat veteran and opposed this item. He stated he was recently homeless and living in his car with nowhere to go. He reported his car was eventually towed. Being a veteran, he was able to get help and had access to resources most people did not. He said he was doing better, living in an apartment, and getting help with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). He thought without the help of veteran services, this ordinance would significantly affect him by putting him in jail and causing him to incur fines he could not pay. He opined criminalizing homelessness was more costly than providing essential resources and services to the unhoused community.

Commissioner Andriola shared that she met with FIANV on a couple of occasions. She thought this ordinance would protect some of the natural resources in the County. She reported that on an average week, the average person produced four pounds of waste, but an unhoused individual produced 50 pounds. She did not think the goal of this ordinance was to criminalize homelessness. She remarked her district was heavily impacted by homelessness. She recalled attending a ride-along with the HOPE Team and touring the End of the World Camp. She believed this ordinance would provide law enforcement with the necessary tools to direct people to the resources they needed. She asserted that evidence-based solutions were critical. She declared the ordinance was about doing everything possible to provide compassion and the resources necessary to the unhoused community. She wondered if the WCSO could create a team of volunteers to

work with the HOPE team. She stated that behavioral health issues were one of the biggest crises the County had, and homelessness was often a result of those issues. She understood that having a misdemeanor in the ordinance was necessary to provide law enforcement with what they needed to do their work. She said it was not affordable or realistic to have law enforcement officers in every corner of the County. She asked Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nathan Edwards if he could explain why it was necessary to have a misdemeanor offense in the ordinance.

ADA Edwards responded that law enforcement hinged on having misdemeanor offenses to give them the power to require people to act or face the consequences. He said the WCSO needed to have the tool to push people to seek services because, short of an officer witnessing a misdemeanor offense, law enforcement did not have a tool to punish the offenses. He stated this ordinance would give the WCSO a mechanism to push people into services or face the possibility of criminal prosecution.

Commissioner Andriola did not think the Board intended to criminalize homelessness. She hoped the HOPE Team could explore alternate approaches, such as working with community volunteers to develop solutions. She declared the homeless issue was impacting her district, and the constituents she served were asking for something to be done about it.

Commissioner Garcia thanked FIANV for its advocacy and work in the community. She remarked there were people in her family who struggled with homelessness and housing insecurity. She declared there were a lot of systemic issues in the County, such as income disparities, generational poverty, a housing crisis, health disparities, and problems with access to education. She thought the Board did not always have control over such significant issues, but it worked diligently to make a difference, especially in the mental health space, by improving mental health infrastructure, providing services, and uplifting essential organizations. She believed public health and safety was the primary goal of this ordinance. She thought that consistency in enforcement was important when tackling issues such as this. She expressed concerns about warming fires, and explained if a fire got out of control in Sun Valley, it could be a catastrophic disaster. She said she had some suggestions for changes to the ordinance. She pointed out that fire concerns were listed in sections 50.400 and 50.500 in the ordinance and wondered if it was a duplication or intentional. She noted that section 50.500 defined fire as an unsafe manner, which she thought was a generalized term. She asked that the legal team change that language to ensure there was no confusion on the implementation side of the ordinance. She noticed that a misdemeanor was listed at the end of 50.400, 50.500, and 70.393, but it was not listed in any of the other sections; she wanted clarification on whether that was an error or intentional. She stated there was a severability clause in 50.400 but did not see one listed anywhere else in the ordinance. She declared that her constituents asked her to support this item. She knew this ordinance needed some work and thought it could be strengthened by adding the WCSO's intended standard operating procedures for enforcement.

ADA Edwards clarified that Commissioner Garcia's notes for changes to the resolution included the fire duplication, the unsafe manner language, misdemeanor language in some of the provisions but not others, severance clauses in some of the provisions but not others, and adding some of the standard operating procedures into the ordinance. Commissioner Garcia confirmed that was correct.

Commissioner Clark stated he met with Sheriff Balaam a few weeks before to discuss this item. He complimented the work of the WCSO. He did not think officers were intentionally trying to incarcerate unhoused people.

Bill No. 1904 was introduced by Commissioner Andriola, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

**24-0114**      **AGENDA ITEM 21** Public Comment.

Ms. Penny Brock provided a document that was placed on file with the Clerk. She spoke about election integrity, which she thought was an issue in the community. She wanted the County to conduct elections with paper ballots and hand counting. She stated that in 2022, there were six counties in Nevada where constituents asked their commissioners to allow people to vote by paper ballots and hand counting. The only County that approved it was Nye County, which was sued by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) for doing so. She said the case went to the Supreme Court, which ruled that Nye County had to add a tabulator to confirm the hand counts were accurate. She looked forward to the resolution proposed by Commissioner Clark at the beginning of the meeting to consider voting by paper ballots. She spoke about the letter sent to the Board by the Secretary of State (SOS) that Chair Hill put on the record during Item 5. She thought the SOS did not say the County could not conduct the vote using paper ballots and hand counting. She read from the document she provided.

Ms. Janet Butcher recalled the SOS claimed the systems used by several counties required additional steps to ensure that voters who did not return their ballot did not have a voting history. Some of those steps were not taken, resulting in inaccurate data. Yet, when Commissioner Andriola asked for clarification that the issue was not the responsibility of the Registrar of Voters (ROV), it was stated that the SOS caused the glitch. She wondered who was really responsible for the issue. She liked Commissioner Andriola's idea to open mock elections up for the public to be a part of. She spoke about her technology background.

Ms. Aspen Murillo commended the Board for passing Item 9B1. She spoke about Item 18 and wondered what happened when no resources were available for people experiencing homelessness. She stated she worked with people to get them into housing, and there were not a lot of available options. She opined the ordinance criminalized homelessness. She thought the County should work to strengthen case management and public health, which she believed were more equipped to work with vulnerable populations.

Ms. Hana Fahmi thought there was a lot of privilege in the County. She noted that if people worked a full-time job, they could not attend a Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting without taking a day off. She alleged that the manager of Qual-Econ, LLC, was a former County employee who had been responsible for collecting bids for services.

Mr. Roger Edwards declared he had applied to provide an invocation at a BCC meeting and had not heard back from the County. He expressed concern with fee increases related to building new housing units. He stated that he was running for the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) and thought it needed another conservative voice.

Ms. Joni Hammond read from the document submitted by Ms. Brock.

County Clerk Jan Galassini stated she received emailed comments which were placed on the record.

**24-0115      AGENDA ITEM 22 Announcements/Reports.**

Commissioner Clark stated he got up early every morning, and the first thing he did was watch the news. He recalled a Channel 2 News interview with Mr. Grant Denton, who claimed more and more people were refusing to go to the Cares Campus. He thought the Board should invite Mr. Denton to a meeting to discuss why he thought people did not want to utilize the Cares Campus. If the Board wanted the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) to encourage people to use services, and fewer people wanted to use those services, he thought the Board needed to find out why.

Commissioner Clark wondered why the Board did not award custodial contracts to several companies instead of hiring one company to cover several buildings. He recalled a public comment claiming that the manager of Qual-Econ, LLC was a former employee and declared he wanted more information regarding that claim. He asserted if that was the case, he wanted to rescind his vote to approve items 10 and 11 until he found out if the person who used to work at the County was now managing a company that the County had just awarded a contract to.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro for filling in for County Manager Eric Brown during the meeting. She appreciated his poignant and articulate comments. She recognized County Clerk Jan Galassini and her office for all their hard work and for meeting compliance requirements in a timely manner. She thanked Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Nathan Edwards for always doing a great job.

\* \* \* \* \*

**5:06 p.m.** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

---

**ALEXIS HILL**, Chair  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

---

**JANIS GALASSINI**, County Clerk and  
Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners

*Minutes Prepared by:*  
*Taylor Chambers, Deputy County Clerk*  
*Danielle Howard, Deputy County Clerk*