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Description automatically generated**  **Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board**

**Minutes of the regular meeting of the Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board held on**

**January 11, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. at Gerlach Community Center, 410 Cottonwood,**

**Gerlach, NV 89412**

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM** Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell, Russell Bierle, Brandy Wilbur, Kristy Evans, Tina Walters (Chair)

Quorum was established and the meeting was called to order.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

1. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT** – Comment heard under this item will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the agenda. The Citizen Advisory Board will also hear public comment during individual action items, with comment limited to three minutes per person. Comments are to be made to the Board as a whole. (non-action item)

No public comment

1. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF** [AUGUST 10](https://www.washoecounty.gov/CABS/GE_CAB/2023/GerlachEmpireAugustCABminutes.pdf), [SEPTEMBER 14](https://www.washoecounty.gov/CABS/GE_CAB/2023/GerlachEmpireSeptemberCABminutes.pdf), [OCTOBER 12](https://www.washoecounty.gov/CABS/GE_CAB/2023/GerlachEmpireOctoberCABminutes.pdf), [DECEMBER 14, 2023](https://www.washoecounty.gov/CABS/GerlachEmpire-CAB-minutes---Dec-2023.pdf) (for possible action)

Participants decided to approve the minutes for August with typo corrections, September, October, and December.

1. **PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES –** A Washoe County Sheriff’s Deputy and/or members from the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe Fire Department may be available to provide a general community update on public safety (non-action item)

Washoe County Sheriff’s Office - Deputy Burns informed participants about the snowy and icy road conditions and advised them to drive with caution. He discussed the consequences of driving too fast for conditions and the importance of driving safely.

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe Fire Department – Cpt. Johnathen Prichard mentioned the availability of the Ambulance Saver program and encouraged participants to subscribe. He mentions that Hazmat Awareness and Fire Academy classes have started, and an advanced DMT course will start in March. He mentions that the phone lines will be having an upgrade completed before the beginning of February to resolve the phone problem completely. He provides a monthly update mentioning various facts such as call volume, incidents on holiday weekends, major events, and classes.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell asked if the phone lines upgrade will be connected to the station as well as the bunkhouse.

Cpt. Johnathen Prichard confirmed that it will be connected and when the phone rings it will ring simultaneously.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell asked if the classes were starting this month.

Cpt. Johnathen Prichard mentions that just started Hazmat Awareness this week with nine students, eight students are scheduled for Fire Academy in two weeks that goes through March and in March will also kick off an advanced EMT course.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell asked if any of the applicants were Gerlach residents.

Cpt. Johnathen Prichard confirmed there are some Gerlach residents/volunteers in the program.

1. **DTS BROADBAND IN YOUR HOME -** Jonathan Young, Chief Executive Officer, DTS Fiber, and Cathren Ezell, Executive Director, DTS Fiber, will provide information about the possibility of expanding broadband fiber internet capabilities to your home, and what improved television service you may expect. (non-action item)

Behzad Zamanian, Chief Information Officer provides a status update on connecting the homes in Gerlach with high-speed internet access, mentioning the progress of the fiber installation and the plan to connect all the properties in Gerlach and Empire. The timeline for the installation and construction is from February 2024 through August-September timeframe. Properties will get connected as DTS works through this project. The initial offer for high-speed internet is $49 for the first five years, with the possibility of a $30 discount for ACP if property owners qualify.

Jonathan Young confirmed that the price for ACP is $30 and corrected the price to $49.99 instead of $49.00.

Behzad Zamanian informs the next step is to bring forward to the BCC in February to obtain the approval. He moves the presentation to Jonathan to continue and provide the next steps.

Jonathan Young provides the project kickoff is planned for mid-February after the contract is signed. The crews will move from Sutcliffe to Gerlach to finish the pole loading and connect homes. The project is expected to be completed in six months, with an additional three months for Empire. The goal is to finish before Burning Man starts. The community's help is needed to get everyone connected. The team will assist and answer questions during the installation process.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell asked if the master list of names or addresses can be made available to help reach out to residents who may not be aware of the project.

Jonathan Young emphasized the importance of ensuring connectivity to everyone. With the owner’s permission installation to the premises can occur, if not, they will leave it coiled for future installation. He encourages community inquiries even with on-site crews and will assist.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell appreciated the assistance, however, is aware that some are either out of town or unaware. Requested to have the property addresses or APNs if no names can be provided.

Jonathan Young suggested that contact information between the CAB member and his team Cathren (Cathren Ezell) be exchanged to facilitate this task.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell raised concern about those homes that have underground power and not aerial leads.

Jonathan Young confirmed those properties are marked and if power is coming from aerial lead then it will continue. If the power is underground, then they will be trenching to the property. He discussed that trees will also be trimmed to avoid obstructions to the fiber optic.

CAB member Kristy Evans recommended that a pamphlet or flyer be passed on regarding pricing options to the community. She raised concern to Behzad Zamanian if there is a reason for possible controversial inquiries when presented to the BCC.

Behzad Zamanian confirmed that the Commissioners are in support and there should be no controversy. Any contract must go to the BCC for approval. Once the project is implemented then a schedule is created, and updates will be provided to share with the property owners.

CAB member Kristy Evans raises concern that the school is not operating on fiber yet although it has been run out there. She requested the update as was informed due to permits or signatures.

Jonathan Young explains the E-rate obligation of the school with the wireless provider and the need for an E-rate application to connect to the fiber internet.

Cathren Ezell confirms application has been submitted and waiting for approval.

CAB member Kristy Evans mentioned the internet went out at the school but not at the library and praised the speaker.

Jonathan Young mentioned there was a one-hour outage back on December 14th due to a mix-up on routing protocols.

CAB member Brandy Wilbur mentions confirmation of an email and will respond to Cathren with the list of approximately 55-60 properties.

Jonathan Young mentions Washoe County is providing money to the provider for running fiber optic, which is a first in Nevada.

CAB member Russell Bierle requested clarification that some installations may be more labor and cost-intensive than just running an aerial. Would that cost be passed to the consumer?

Jonathan Young mentions the county is covering the installation cost for all residents which is why the process is taking longer than hoped.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell requested confirmation that there is no cost to this installation. In the future if someone wants to build or buy a piece of property that will be their responsibility.

Jonathan Young discusses the cost and provides an example of providing conduit while working with developers on subdivisions.

Behzad Zamanian clarifies that with the contract any property within a mile of where fiber is, DTS will take on the connectivity cost.

Jonathan Young mentions that it could be half to a full mile. He mentions replacing the responsibility over the ILK status from AT&T thus converting it to be a federal mandate to service homes in Empire.

1. **NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING HUB STANDING AGENDA ITEM –** Candee Ramos, Washoe County Community Outreach Coordinator, to share the latest community information on the Neighborhood Meeting HUB featuring development community meetings.(non-action item)

Candee Ramos mentions no upcoming meetings were for the Gerlach area. The Neighborhood meeting hub was discussed and a screen sharing session was conducted to showcase the hub.

Cpt. Johnathen Prichard (Fire) inquired if there are any new developments or approved plans for developments near the Apple facility west of Wadsworth. He mentions there were prior discussions that Truckee Meadows would start to build there.

Candee Ramos discusses that the only projects are the Dodge Flat Energy Center and the Lockwood IC Center. She will follow up with staff on any updates.

CAB member Kristy Evans expresses concern about the project ORMAT and asks about its progress.

Candee Ramos mentions there are no project updates at this time.

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) mentions the lithium project and 360 specific plan and the rescheduling of the community meeting.

CAB member Kristy Evans discusses the 360 specific plan was slated to go before the Planning Commission on January 2nd, application was placed on hold and is no longer on the website.

Pete Dronkers, Burning Man mentions this was the same information and in addition, it is currently in the County’s hands.

Candee Ramos will inquire with staff and will provide future updates.

Pete Dronkers, Burning Man mentions more information associated with the lithium project. The Canadian Company that owns claims in the area will be doing sampling that does not require The National Environmental Policy Act triggered and no permits are required. He will keep the community posted on any updates.

1. **COMMISSIONER AND BOARD MEMBER ITEMS** — This item is limited to announcements and/or requests for future agenda items by CAB members and potential general announcements from the county commissioner and county manager. (non-action item)

CAB member Elisabeth (Schatzi) Gambrell requests to invite the new lieutenant responsible for the deputies for the area to a future meeting for community introduction.

CAB member Kristy Evans mentions the new timer that Candee Ramos has purchased and appreciates the assistance. She requests a newer computer that the County can donate and replace the current one used for GGID meetings. She mentions the Burning Man position posted and the increase in future attendance.

CAB member Russell Bierle expresses concern about the subdivision project and asks about its progress will be included in the community meeting. Candee Ramos explains that the community meeting was not part of the process for moving the project forward and clarifies the process for neighborhood development meetings and public participation.

1. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT** – Comment heard under this item will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the agenda. The public is encouraged to submit a “Request to Speak” form to the Board chairman. Comments are to be addressed to the Board as a whole. (non-action item)

Carl Kopec expresses concern about disruptive behavior and the need for civility in Gerlach. He mentions the Burning Man property, the progress made in Gerlach, and the need for rational dialogue and consensus building.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned.