

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

RETREAT

MONDAY

12:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 14, 2009

PRESENT:

David Humke, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson*
Bob Larkin, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner
John Breternitz, Commissioner

Nancy Parent, Chief Deputy County Clerk
Katy Simon, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel

The Board convened its Strategic Planning Retreat at 12:38 p.m. at the Mills Lane Justice Center, 1 South Sierra Street, South Tower, 3rd Floor, Room 310, Reno, Nevada. The following discussions ensued:

09-1320 AGENDA ITEM 1

Agenda Subject: “Public Comment. Comment heard under this item will be limited to two minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the Commission agenda. All public comment for this meeting will be heard during this item. Comments are to be made to the Commission as a whole.”

There was no response to the call for public comment.

09-1321 AGENDA ITEM 2

Agenda Subject: “The purpose of the Strategic Planning Retreat is to discuss and possibly give direction regarding vision, mission, strategic objectives and goals of the Washoe County Commission, which may include, but not be limited to, review, discussion and possible direction to staff regarding:

- Washoe County’s strategic planning process
- The 2009 Washoe County Environmental Scan
- The Washoe County Vision Statement
- The Washoe County Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives
- Identification of Board of County Commission Goals
- Identification of Key Performance Measures related to Board of County Commission Goals”

Katy Simon, County Manager, said today's goal was to provide the Board with the information about the environment in which planning was being done, the department's accomplishments and future challenges, and to review the new process the Board recently adopted. She said there would also be time for the Board to consider what would be its strategic objectives and goals and what would be most important for the County to be working on going forward. She said the discussion would start with the strategic planning process, would look at the environmental scan, would examine the vision statement, mission statement, and the strategic objectives. She stated the discussion would also identify the County Commission's goals and the measures the Commission wanted staff to monitor in tracking those goals.

John Slaughter, Management Services Director, stated he had handed out the existing Vision and Mission Statement, the Organizational Values, the 2008-2010 Strategic Plan Summary, and the Washoe County Department Accomplishment Report. Copies of the documents were placed on file with the Clerk. He noted the terms defined in the Strategic Planning Glossary would be the starting point for the discussion.

12:44 p.m. Commissioner Weber arrived.

Mr. Slaughter said, during the Commission meeting on October 13, 2009, changes to the Strategic Planning Model lead to a simplified version as was shown in slide 3 of his Strategic Planning Retreat PowerPoint presentation. A copy of the presentation was placed on file with the Clerk. He noted an increased focus was being placed on the departments' results and on the Board's goals.

Mr. Slaughter's presentation also reviewed the Long Term Elements/Terminology, Short Term Elements/Terminology, Department and Employee Plans, BCC Fall Retreat Outcomes, the items that would occur after this retreat, and the revised Strategic Planning Model. He noted the Vision and Mission Statements, Strategic Objectives, 2010-2011 Goals, and Key Performance Measures would be discussed later in the day.

Mr. Slaughter said today's goal was to take a look at the Vision and Mission Statements, the Strategic Objectives, and to receive direction regarding the Board's high-level goals for next year. He noted the departments would be refining the performance measures so they would be reportable to the Board.

Commissioner Larkin said in the past there had been a joint meeting with the Department Heads to go over some of these things in case there were questions. Ms. Simon said there were some challenges with the Open Meeting Law regarding that format, which was one of the reasons the Strategic Planning Committee was established. She noted the Committee would be meeting with the Department Heads to translate the Board's view. She stated Commissioner Breternitz served on the Committee and would have the liaison role for the Board. She explained the Board's strategic view would be given to the departments, the departments would develop the process, and then the Department Heads would discuss the Plan with the Board.

Commissioner Larkin believed it was important that the Board have an opportunity to interface with the Department Heads in some capacity prior to the start of the budget hearings. Commissioner Weber agreed. Commissioner Larkin stated it should not be a one-directional conversation, but there should be some feedback occurring. Ms. Simon agreed and indicated the proposed schedule was shown on slide 16. Commissioner Larkin suggested the meeting occur before the Strategic Planning Retreat, but after the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on January 15, 2010.

Mr. Slaughter said as part of the environmental scan there would be discussion regarding achievements, which would lead into a discussion regarding the SWOT analysis. He explained SWOT stood for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and the reason for doing the SWOT analysis was it would generate ideas that would translate into next year's goals.

Nathan Branscome, Management Fellow, explained the reason for doing an environmental scan was to provide a snapshot of the conditions under which the County was operating and what some of the largest impacts of the economic, social, and environmental factors would be on the County. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding the 2009 Environmental Scan, which included information on economic, social, and environmental trends; indicators specific to Washoe County government; and Washoe County 2008/09 accomplishments. A copy of the presentation was placed on file with the Clerk.

Commissioner Larkin asked if there was any idea why Area Crime Evaluation Systems (ACES) reported crimes had dropped below the four-year average from September through November for Fiscal Year 2009/10. Undersheriff Todd Vinger explained the numbers were actually up slightly, but it was too early to spot a trend. He stated the biggest concern was the increase in violent crimes. Commissioner Larkin asked him to elaborate on the kinds of violent crimes. Undersheriff Vinger advised they included homicides, juvenile crimes, stabbings, batteries, and domestic violence.

Undersheriff Vinger said what used to be counted as an arrest for a new crime no longer counted as such because of the diversion programs. He explained the crimes were not actually being reduced, but were being reported differently. Commissioner Larkin said the Board needed to understand how they were being reported so resource allocations could be made. Richard Gammick, District Attorney, replied there were six different diversion courts and, once some of the people successfully completed a program, their entire record was expunged. He said there was no way of tracking how many people were being processed through the system and would ultimately fall out of the system. Commissioner Larkin noted if their record was expunged and they were rearrested; there would be no way of knowing if that was part of a continuing pattern. Mr. Gammick said if the records were sealed, the records for some crimes could be reopened for the purposes of recidivism. He advised he was not sure that was true across the board, because he knew of two diversion-court systems that were not totally established.

Commissioner Larkin asked if the underreporting of violent crimes was a weakness. Undersheriff Vinger replied he did not feel it was a weakness, but everyone needed to be aware of what was happening because cases were still added to the workloads of the District Attorney, the courts, and law enforcement. He said if only pure statistical numbers were looked at on a chart, those cases would not be seen.

Chairman Humke asked if the adult criminal courts reported in a uniform way. Howard Conyers, District Court Administrator, replied they did. Commissioner Larkin said his concern was the reporting of violent crimes.

Mr. Gammick indicated the District Attorney's (DA's) Office could take a look at the deferred cases to see if that was an appreciable figure or not. He noted the DA's office stayed involved in those cases at least through deferment. Chairman Humke suggested Mr. Conyers work with the Sheriff's Office to come up with some kind of standardized reporting. Mr. Conyers said he had been working with the DA's Office on trying to do a better job of implementing the codes mandated by the Legislature so those codes could be used for reporting purposes. He felt using those codes would provide better information as to the type of cases they were and how they were ultimately disposed.

Commissioner Larkin explained he did not want to get into the numbers, but his point was if the County was below the four-year average on a monthly basis, why should the Sheriff's Office be given more resources. Undersheriff Vinger said if the actual numbers were counted, they would show crime numbers were sustained or had gone up. He advised the better indicator would be if the length of stay in the jail had gone up due to some other issues with current cases. He said an increase in the stay in the jail would increase the costs. Commissioner Larkin stated he was not asking Undersheriff Vinger to make his case right now, but he wanted the correct information when the Board was considering resource allocation.

Mr. Gammick stated it became painfully obvious that there was not a standardized definition of "case" within the State, which should be considered when discussing this. He said the Supreme Court was asked to standardize the definition so everybody would be reporting the same statistics.

Mr. Gammick said another issue was he did not believe these numbers reflected the Cities of Reno and Sparks, but only the Sheriff's Office. He advised the City of Reno's violent crimes and property crimes were up, especially burglaries. He said all of that had to be considered because the DA's Office handled the prosecution of all of the cases. He stated his office was trying to get this all worked out.

Mr. Branscome noted slide 21 only showed the statistics from the Public Defender's (PD's) Office and did not include the Alternate PD's Office.

Chairman Humke asked what "staffing reduced for specialty court assignment" meant. Mr. Branscome replied the PD's Office had to take attorneys from

their family court assignments to deal with specialty court cases. Ms. Simon said she would follow up on Chairman Humke's question, and she noted the same thing happened in the DA's Office as well. Mr. Gammick explained the PD's Office counted every defendant as a case and the DA's Office counted cases as those coming from the agencies regardless of how many defendants or how many charges. He said that would be like trying to compare apples to oranges. He reiterated the Supreme Court was asked to come up with a standardized definition for everyone to use. He advised throughout the country the standard was to count the number of defendants.

Commissioner Jung asked if it took a Supreme Court ruling for the County to ask the different departments to track or trend what the County determined to be a track or a trend. Mr. Gammick replied the DA's Office felt there should be a statewide definition because it was a statewide issue. He said in anticipation of the Court going with the defendant standard, the DA's Office would be furnishing the Board with the statistics on the number of defendants over the last three years. He advised the police agencies still did their reporting on the number of cases. Commissioner Jung said for the County's purposes, she wanted apples to be compared to apples.

Mr. Slaughter explained when looking at the SWOT analysis, strengths and weaknesses were internal while opportunities and threats were external. He said this information would be used to discuss capitalizing on the County's strengths, shoring up its weaknesses, investing in opportunities, and identifying and preparing a response to threats. He stated internal strengths and weaknesses were under the County's control, while external threats were hard for the County to control.

The Board discussed and generated the following strengths as part of their discussion:

- High quality of the management team.
- Specialty courts.
- Great communication and working relationship with employees.
- Regional Animal Services.
- Organizational Intelligence in data analysis, forecasting, and decision support information.
- Leaders and visionaries in community. Provided example of County's role in statewide leadership summit.
- Great Board – thoughtful and deliberate.
- Great volunteers.
- Technology.

The Board then identified the following weaknesses:

- Employee morale.
- Employee vacancies.
- Increasing sick-leave usage.

- Loss of employees and the loss of valuable institutionalized knowledge because it causes tunnel vision.
- Reporting accomplishments or activities rather than outcomes.
- Reporting statistics. Needed to make valid comparisons when making budget or policy decisions. Example discussion on court statistics.
- Lacking the nimbleness to match Board priorities with citizen requests/needs, which can change based on the economic climate.
- Internal cooperation with labor associations during labor negotiations.

While discussing potential opportunities, Commissioner Larkin said the County should be developing a sustainable resource engine. He explained he felt the focus should be taken off revenue and the discussion should be expanded to looking at all resources. For example, the resources needed to keep a library going in lieu of revenue. Commissioner Weber felt that could be put in simpler terms by stating every department would need to look outside the box. She felt the labor organizations held things back because of having to negotiate to do job shadowing or more extensive use of volunteers that could be used to keep the libraries open longer hours. Commissioner Larkin said the discussion needed to shift from the number of employees needed to the resources needed.

Mr. Slaughter summarized the following opportunities that were itemized as part of the Board's discussion:

- Sharing services.
- Working better with other governmental entities.
- Developing sustainable resource engine.
- Looking outside the box.
- Matching Board priorities with citizen requests/needs, which can change based on the economic climate.
- Explaining to the public how revenue systems worked, including where their tax dollars went so they would understand what the County did and the value of local and County governments.

The Board then discussed threats and generated the following list of possible threats:

- Extended economic downturn.
- 2010 National Association of Counties (NACo) Conference.
- Expectations of residents.
- The positive and negatives of Xeriscape landscaping.
- Economic basis of the State. Over reliance on a couple of sectors that were very volatile.
- Special Legislative Session and 2011 regular Legislative Session.
- Aging population.
- Restrictive operating environment due to regulatory restrictions.

Mr. Slaughter said after a short break, the discussion would focus on the Vision and Mission Statements and the Strategic Objectives.

2:26 p.m. A brief recess was declared.

2:37 p.m. The retreat reconvened with Commissioner Jung absent.

Mr. Slaughter said the definition of a vision statement was, "A short, concise, vivid statement of the organization's future." He read the current Vision Statement. Commissioner Weber said she liked the current Vision Statement, but a few words could be removed. Commissioner Larkin stated he would not mess with it at all because everyone had worked hard on creating that statement over the years.

Ms. Simon stated when the County embarked on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program, the County did an assessment of its performance as it was perceived by the employees in the seven areas Baldrige considered critical areas. She said the County scored very high in the leadership element, but the strongest criticism the employees made was they did not know what the County's vision was. She believed part of that was because the Vision Statement was not very concise.

Commissioner Breternitz agreed and felt 99 percent of the County's employees could not tell what the County's vision was if they were asked. He believed there should be one sentence that described what the County was all about and would be something employees could remember. Commissioner Weber felt the people the statement should reach were the general public.

Ms. Simon said she remembered Commissioner Breternitz saying the reason he was on the Commission was to help make Washoe County the best place in the United States. She suggested condensing the statement to, "Washoe County will be the most desirable place in the United States to live, work, and visit" because that was at the core of how the Board felt. Commissioner Weber suggested using "Country" instead of "United States."

Commissioner Larkin said the statement had been worked on extensively. Commissioner Breternitz stated there had been discussion on moving forward with a whole different approach for operating as a government. He suggested not getting fixated with what the Mission and Vision Statements were before and, he felt that everything was open and up for grabs. Commissioner Larkin stated he did not agree with that. He felt the Vision Statement was something an employee could memorize because it was one sentence. He said it should hold critical information in it and capture all of the County's priorities.

Commissioner Weber said there were new members on the Board and they should have the opportunity to discuss the Mission and Vision Statements.

Chairman Humke asked if the earlier discussion about threats, such as the long-term changes in the economic situation, would change the Vision Statement. Commissioner Breternitz felt the Vision and Mission Statements should be able to withstand any threats, because threats would come and go.

Mr. Slaughter said the Strategic Planning Committee looked at the Vision and Mission Statements and they reached the point where they were talking about one statement.

Ms. Simon felt there were a few things that would make the Vision Statement easier to remember while still keeping it's essence: the wording "by preserving and enhancing our quality of life" was a mission piece or a "how." She suggested focusing on, "Washoe County would be the healthiest, safest, and most compelling place in the Country in which to live, work, recreate." Commissioner Weber said she liked that.

Commissioner Larkin asked if the discussion was about the applicability of vision and mission statements in general. He said the current state of the art was to do away with mission statements and only have vision statements. He would prefer not integrating the two statements. He felt the Vision Statement was what grabbed people and also the values were very important.

Mr. Slaughter discussed his Strategic Planning Retreat slides regarding mission statements, which included examples from other organizations. He stated the Strategic Planning Committee noted during their discussion some key words that could be in a statement, which were listed on slide 40 along with some specific statements.

Commissioner Weber felt the County's Mission Statement was already clarified in the County's values and the Mission Statement should be eliminated. She noted she liked the word "caring" used in the Los Angeles' Mission Statement. She stated it was important to tell people that the County staff and the Board cared. Commissioner Larkin clarified that was actually a value.

Commissioner Weber asked if everyone was okay with getting rid of the Mission Statement. Commissioner Larkin replied he was. Chairman Humke stated he could go either way. Commissioner Breternitz said he favored only having the Vision Statement. Commissioner Weber agreed.

Commissioner Weber felt the goal was for people to think this was the best place in the Country. Commissioner Larkin stated that was a value. Ms. Simon said that was the desired end state. Commissioner Breternitz suggested the, "Best place in the US to live, work, recreate, visit, and invest." Commissioner Larkin said that came from the strategic priorities.

Ms. Simon said the County's vision would be, "Washoe County will be the best place in the country to live, work, recreate, visit, and invest." Commissioners

Breternitz, Weber, and Larkin agreed they liked it. She confirmed the Mission Statement would be discarded.

Ms. Simon asked if the Board wanted to confirm the organizational values the way they were. Commissioner Weber suggested instead of using the word "Community" that it could say, "Many Communities – One County" in bold as the caption and then go on to say, "We take pride...". For Quality Public Service she suggested removing the words "to all." Commissioner Larkin suggested changing teamwork to read, "We believe in the value and spirit of cooperative efforts within our organization and our community." Chairman Humke and Commissioner Breternitz agreed with the changes.

Commissioner Weber asked if "Professionalism" was needed. Commissioner Larkin said it was a statement of value. Chairman Humke said the people who strived to project those attributes appreciated that statement, which was a worthwhile goal.

Mr. Slaughter stated the current Strategic Objectives were shown on slide 42. He did not believe it was the Strategic Planning Committee's intention that any of the objectives would be taken away, but he asked if anything was missing, had any of the objectives been accomplished and could come off the list, or were they still the focus of the County's vision.

Commissioner Breternitz felt it would have to be determined how, by blending all of these together, it would boil down to a structure that would use the available resources, which included revenue. He felt there should be some reference to the vehicle that would structurally achieve that. Ms. Simon stated it would be the optimal organization. Commissioner Breternitz believed that would be one of the challenges the Board would be faced with over the next couple of years.

Ms. Simon indicated "accountability" over the last several years had transformed from "financial viability" to "fiscal health" to "accountability." She felt it might be losing the essence of what was being talked about, which was for the government to be financially sustainable. Chairman Humke felt "accountability" reflected a bond between government and the taxpayers. Ms. Simon advised that was a kind of value. Commissioner Weber suggested "resource management." Commissioner Larkin discussed why they arrived at "accountability." He agreed the "accountability" component needed to move towards "sustainability," because programs could not be implemented that were not sustainable over a long period of time. Commissioner Breternitz felt a "sustainable organizational structure" would be a better way of stating it than how he stated it initially.

Commissioner Larkin said each strategic objective had key outcomes and he felt "organization" would be a key outcome. He felt the goal should be sustainability of the organization and its resources. Ms. Simon asked if "accountability" should be moved into the values section. Commissioner Larkin felt it was already there.

Chairman Humke asked if the key outcomes would be dropped. Ms. Simon said staff was working on changing them to goals and other language. She said this piece needed to be done first so staff would know the broad-brush areas that the Board felt must be done to produce the vision.

Commissioner Larkin said dropping the priority of "Develop Our Workforce" was being considered. Ms. Simon explained it was being encompassed by "Excellent Services" and it could be argued that it was redundant because it was the way safe and secure communities were produced and the quality of life was improved.

Commissioner Larkin said he wondered, since starting the discussion on sustainability, if a few of these could be key outcomes of sustainability or regional collaboration. He said regional collaboration was initially broken out because the County was starting work on that, but he was starting to wonder if it would fall under sustainability.

Commissioner Breternitz said to get to the new vision statement, certain things needed to be done such as expanding regional collaboration. He asked how that fit and if it was a goal. Commissioner Larkin said it was an outcome. Ms. Simon explained the key outcomes listed would become the Board's annual goals. She felt part of what the Board was doing was letting the community know what was important. She said the key outcomes were provided as a reference point so there would be continuity while evaluating the strategic objectives to see if they still represented what the Board felt Washoe County was about and what staff should be focused on. Mr. Slaughter said thinking of how strategic objectives would be defined would help put into context what should be in them to get to the County's vision.

Commissioner Weber asked if the suggestion was to remove "accountability." Ms. Simon felt "accountability" was a value and was important, but it was not an activity. She said the piece needed to be found that was around the internal health of the organization that was a sustainable, ongoing, and viable effort. Commissioner Weber felt the public would want to know that the County was accountable. Commissioner Larkin said it was in the value statement.

After further discussion, Ms. Simon said "accountability" would be moved to values, replacing "integrity." She stated "accountability" would be replaced by "sustainable resources" and "excellent public services" would be moved under "sustainable resources."

Commissioner Larkin suggested the strategic objectives would be the following:

- Safe, Secure and Healthy Communities
- High Quality of Life
- Regional Collaboration

- Healthy Economy
- Sustainable Resources

Commissioner Weber felt the County had no control over making the economy healthy. Chairman Humke said it was a moving target and was outside local control. Commissioner Larkin stated “affordable housing,” the “Target 2010” process, and “healthy vibrant downtowns” were under “healthy economy.” Commissioner Weber felt it should just be “housing” because of foreclosures, which was a change since that was written. She suggested changing “healthy economy.” Ms. Simon suggested “regional prosperity.” Commissioners Breternitz and Weber agreed that sounded better.

- “Healthy Economy” was changed to “Regional Prosperity.”

Mr. Slaughter stated the Board’s annual goals might not be a one-to-one match to the strategic objectives because the focus might be on only one goal this year, due to resource constraints. He said it was not envisioned going through each objective to determine the goals for that objective, but to ask what would be the highest priorities for the year that would move the County closer to achieving the longer-term strategic objectives. He stated the objective was to eventually have annual goals that were specific, achievable, measurable, time based and someone would be responsible for meeting them.

Ms. Simon asked the Board what they had been hearing from their constituents. She suggested referring back to the SWOT analysis in looking at the annual goals.

Chairman Humke stated he did not know if that was the intention, but there was nothing about resolving governance issues. He explained County residents did not perceive the County had a voice in resolving fire issues and that needed to be taken care of. Commissioner Larkin asked if this was not related to the master plan discussion. Chairman Humke said he did not know what the master plan would contain. Commissioner Weber asked if that thought could be incorporated with the Fire Service Master Plan. Chairman Humke replied it could be put with the Fire Service Master Plan or additional areas of shared services. Ms. Simon asked how the goal would be phrased. Chairman Humke replied it should state, “To provide a voice for all citizens in the governance of all services.”

Commissioner Weber suggested encouraging people to take pride in their neighborhood. Commissioner Breternitz stated “the power of one.”

After additional discussion, Mr. Slaughter documented the following goals identified by the Board:

- Creating a sustainable organizational structure.
- Implementing the Diamante Study – Fire Service Master Plan.
- Improving the management of solid waste in the region and reducing illegal dumping.

- Identifying three additional areas for consolidation/shared services.
- Increasing efficiency of using reclaimed waste water.
- Implementing the “two-map system” to separate master planning from zoning.

Commissioner Breternitz asked if there would be another opportunity to discuss the goals. Mr. Slaughter said the list should be the four to five highest priority goals that could have an overarching impact on achieving the County’s strategic objectives. Ms. Simon stated the 2010 election and the next Legislative Session would have an impact, and she asked if the Board wanted any goals related to those two items.

Commissioner Weber said the 2010 Census and redistricting would also be happening. Mr. Slaughter said initial Census results would be available in February 2011 and the final numbers would be available in May 2011. Commissioner Larkin stated those results would be needed for redistricting.

Commissioner Larkin said he would be watching his e-mail for significant areas of reduction for sharing services from Department Heads.

Ms. Simon said after the Strategic Planning Committee looked at what was discussed today, this would be brought to the retreat with the Department Heads. She said if anyone had any additional thoughts, they should send them to her with a copy to Mr. Slaughter.

Commissioner Breternitz asked to have some thought given to how this could be kept in front of the Board on a regular basis. Commissioner Weber suggested bringing this to a Board meeting on a quarterly basis so the public could provide input. Ms. Simon replied staff was anxious to work with the Strategic Planning Committee to work on creating an ongoing sustainable process that would not create a lot more work for departments, but would give the Board the information they needed while still keeping it to the front regarding what should be worked on.

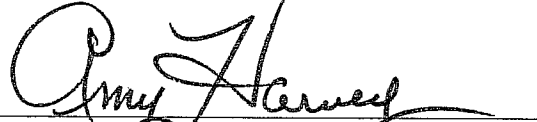
Commissioner Larkin said along with it being sustainable, it also needed to be meaningful.

Ms. Simon said after the retreat with the Department Heads in January 2010, there would be another review in February 2010 to adopt the 2010/11 plan so the departments could use the plan to work on their budgets.

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3:55 p.m. There being no further business to be conducted, Chairman Humke adjourned the retreat.

The foregoing minutes represent the understanding of the Washoe County Clerk's Office of the discussions held during this meeting.



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

*Minutes Prepared by
Jan Frazzetta, Deputy County Clerk*