

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

April 28, 2015

PRESENT:

Marsha Berkgigler, Chair
Kitty Jung, Vice Chair
Vaughn Hartung, Commissioner
Jeanne Herman, Commissioner
Bob Lucey, Commissioner

Nancy Parent, County Clerk
John Slaughter, County Manager
Paul Lipparelli, Legal Counsel

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:01 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, which was led by a student of Reno High School, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

15-0317 AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Subject: “Public Comment. Comment heard under this item will be limited to three minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the Commission agenda. The Commission will also hear public comment during individual action items, with comment limited to three minutes per person. Comments are to be made to the Commission as a whole.”

Eddie Lorton submitted a letter, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He complained the newspaper reported the settlement agreement with the ballpark was a done deal before the public meeting had taken place and he believed the settlement would be a losing proposition for the County. He claimed some of the Commissioners lobbied for the agreement and he felt those Board members should abstain from voting for ethical reasons. He said he had proof that the “begging billionaire” owed the County \$2.7 million in back taxes and the settlement agreement would set a precedence that no one would have to pay their taxes on time or pay penalties if they were late.

Otilia Krapff said most AAA ballparks on the Pacific Coast Baseball League did not pay property taxes because the stadiums were owned by the City, County or State. She stated that was not the case in Reno because the developer owned the land beneath the stadium, while the Reno Redevelopment Agency owned the stadium itself. She said the lawyers representing the ballpark were trying to find legal mechanisms to make the ballpark tax exempt and she wondered if the County considered transferring the land to the City, the County or to the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority

(RSCVA). She suggested the County develop a non-taxable use agreement so the developer could use the stadium or alternatively close the ballpark down. She expressed her frustration with the Board.

Brigid "Anne" Buckley asked the Board to restore funding to parks and open spaces. She said the Parks Department budget was cut from \$9 million to less than \$3 million in 2008 and had not been restored since that time. She talked about the rise in the number of park visitors and said, even though Park staff managed to keep the system functioning, there were many issues that needed attention. She said the County's decision to place culture and recreation low on their priority list did not reflect public sentiment and she thought parks and open spaces were a large part of community health. She provided a copy of her statement, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

Garth Elliott talked about the Sun Valley Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). He said the CAB contributed to projects, such as improvements to Sun Valley Boulevard and to efforts to bring businesses into the County. He said Sun Valley had 25,000 residents and it was unconscionable that they no longer had a fully functioning CAB to represent them.

Paul Jackson spoke about the ballpark issue. He said he understood the Board had a difficult decision to make, but he thought the County was in a position of strength. He said any sports franchise would want to locate in Reno because companies like Tesla were coming to the area. He said if the County made the decision to waive the penalties for delinquent taxes they should require the ballpark developer to pay the back taxes up front rather than over a four-year period. He said the settlement agreement would not be good for the City, County or State.

Karen Munson, Young Electric Sign Company (YESCO), encouraged the Board to vote in favor of the draft amendment to the Development Code concerning signs on larger properties. She said County staff did an amazing job researching the matter and she thought they brought forth a strong and viable proposal.

Alex Woodley, City of Reno Code Enforcement Manager, said he wanted to thank and acknowledge Shyanne Schull, Director Regional Animal Services, and Bobby Smith, Animal Control Supervisor, for being responsive and receptive to concerns and recommendations. He said he appreciated their hard work.

Eugene Hoover, President Silver State Couriers, said he was unhappy about the newspaper article regarding the ballpark situation. He asked the Board to delay making a decision on the matter to give the public an opportunity to speak out about how they felt about it.

Nathan Daniel, Executive Director of Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation, said well-maintained parks increased property values, provided opportunities for economic development, and provided places for people to get outside and experience the physical and mental health benefits of being outdoors. He said the reduction in the