



Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board

DRAFT: Approval of these draft minutes, or any changes to the draft minutes, will be reflected in writing in the next meeting minutes and/or in the minutes of any future meeting where changes to these minutes are approved by the CAB Minutes of the Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board.

The regular meeting of the Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board held on March 9, 2023, 6 p.m. at the Gerlach Community Center, 410 Cottonwood, Gerlach, NV 89412, and via teleconference.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM** – Tina Walters, Andy Moore, Kristy Evans, Elizabeth Gambrell, Brandy Wilbur. Allen Nash and Russel Bierle were absent.
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – The Pledge was recited.
- 3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT** – There were no requests for public comment.
- 4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF [FEBRUARY 9, 2023](#)** (for possible action) – Andy Moore moved to approve the minutes of February 9, 2023. Kristy Evans seconded the motion which carried unanimously in favor.
- 5. WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE** – A WCSO deputy may be available to provide a general community update (non-action item).

Deputy Burns advised taking supplies when going off-roading. He said we had had a string of burglaries in Fish Springs. He advised to lock your door and get security cameras. We have the crossing guard installed.

6. PAIUTE TRIBE AND COUNTY MANAGER PRESENTATION – Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe chairman James Phoenix, Washoe County Manager Eric Brown, and Behzad Zamanian, Chief Information Officer of Washoe County, will provide a brief presentation and answer community questions regarding the collaboration between the Tribe and the County for the benefit of Gerlach/Empire residents. (non-action item)

County Manager Brown provided an update on the recent collaborations on projects. Mr. Zamanian provided an update on the broadband progress.

Ms. Gambrell thanked him for working hard on the timeline. She asked if we made any provisions for Empire, NV.

Mr. Zamanian said absolutely. I think that the route will include the Empire. I think one of the maps should show that.

Mr. Brown said Behzad and I are going to make a site visit with the provider DTS. We're going to spend the day with them next Tuesday. I think Gabby will be with us also. We're starting Nixon and see where they have taken the feed from the Tribe, and then we'll come up to Empire and Gerlach. And this is the stage where we start talking to you, the community, and others about how we design the build-out to residences, and businesses, including Empire. We want to talk more about that with everybody.

Ms. Evans thanked Mr. Zamanian. She asked where is the communication center going to be. Mr. Zamanian said it would be next to the community center. It's the planned location, close to the library and school district. Ms. Evans with the potential of the plan for the new subdivision, it

would be great to have that as part of that thinking. Mr. Brown said yes, we hear you and that's part of why we're dragging Gabby up there next week, because some of the grants that Behzad is talking about might involve grant funding specifically for residential developments. So yes, that we will not forget about the new development in our plans.

Ms. Wilbur said I just wanted to let you know I will be an Empire next week. I know it's hard to contact people over there, and people don't know where to go. If you swing by next week, I should be at the store to help facilitate anything for Empire. Mr. Brown said let's coordinate because I think we can tell you roughly what time we're going to be coming through. And that would be fantastic because, otherwise, we don't know where we're going.

Mr. Nash said I'm wondering about the implementation that goes directly to homes, is it going to be wire fiber directly to homes? Or is there going to be a wireless component?

Mr. Brown said I can't answer that for you, yet. I think when Behzad and I talked to the State, they would prefer to see fiber to the home. I know from my background in broadband, that's really not feasible if you have a bunch of single-family residents on huge lots, like ranch homes. So, I think what you're going to see as a hybrid, where there'll be some residential locations in Gerlach, up to a certain distance from the pedestal that will enable us to do fiber. There might be others where we have to look at fixed wireless, because you have acreage that you got to get across and it wouldn't be financially feasible. But here again, those are the things that we were starting to think about right now along with the vendor. And we'll be talking to you guys more about that as we learn more.

Mr. Brown thanked Chair Phoenix.

James Phoenix, Chair of the Paiute Tribe, introduced himself and thanked Eric.

7. RAIL AUXILIARY TEAM (RAT) OVERVIEW – Program Coordinator and Rail Awareness Consultant Richard Gent will share information on how RAT provides training and education to individuals familiar with rail operations under the direction of local law enforcement to act as a force multiplier in helping keep their communities safe and secure. (non-action item)

Mr. Gent provided a PowerPoint slideshow.

8. ORMAT STANDING AGENDA ITEM – Board Members may wish to speak on updates pertaining to Ormat exploratory activity. This time is limited to 10 minutes of general discussion. (non-action item)

Chair Walters reported I got this email today that the county commission will be hearing about Ormat in chambers at 10am, Tuesday, April 11. There's a zoom link. I printed out a few of these. There's a couple at the door. I'm sharing it on email and social media for anybody who wants to be a part of the Ormat meeting.

Ms. Gambrell said just so everybody knows I can fit three more people in my car and will be carpooling. It is at the County Commissioners meeting, you do get your three minutes, you can read through all of that in there on how to happens, but you actually get to be present for it. We as a community have stood up to a lot of things out here over the years, because we come together as a community. So the more people in the building we have, I think it is better. You're welcome to ride with me, contact me after the meeting. Chair Walters said she is going also.

Ms. Evans said I don't know if this is a question, Eric, that would not be appropriate to answer. But given the nature of this challenge to the permitting that happened. Do you have any advice for

community members who wish to voice their concerns? In other words, how do we best voice our concerns in a way that is relevant to the discussion that's going to happen at that meeting?

Mr. Brown said that's a tough question. When I was there last time, I think we talked with a gentleman from BLM was there. He mentioned that part of their evaluation criteria included, 'was their significant public input or concern,' those weren't the exact words he used. I think you guys have demonstrated in multiple meetings where a large portion of the community actually showed up to express your concerns about this. There's a lot of things you could say but that seems to me that that's one thing that the decision makers ought to know is this is just not a few people in the community, this is virtually everybody in the community has concerns and they ought to at least think about doing an environmental impact study. I would also advise you maybe to ask your commissioner because they'll be presenting to her, and I know she's on today. Commissioner, is there anything additionally that you would recommend that folks think about?

Commissioner Herman said the biggest thing is to have a good showing. Get as many people there as you can. I'm behind you all so strongly, and in your county managers for you all the way. We need to make this work. So honesty, politeness, talk from your heart, and as a community, and I think we can make it and we'll get the job done that way.

Melissa Adams said I believe there's a zoom link. But if you're on Zoom, you can't talk. So it's really important if that's true, we make sure all the people in this town and around that are really against it know that they need to have their butts in their seats. Mr. Brown said that is true. And I know the commissioner has asked the chair to reconsider that. But that hasn't happened yet. So I want you to know, she's made her feelings known about the fact that people who have to travel long distances, typically this time of year to get to chambers should have the ability to do so remotely, but that hasn't happened. The other thing you could do is you could write an email, those get in the record, also. But as she just explained, the most effective way is to be there and to speak your peace. And I will tell you after the last CAB meeting, where you had the gentleman from BLM there, I don't think the commissioner was able to join us that night, but I came back and I told people as another commissioners and staff here that how impressive you guys were as a group because you were passionate, but you're respectful. You make good points that had to be considered. I've seen you do it and I'm sure you represent well.

Marjory Reynolds said I'm a homeowner out on Diablo. It's bigger than Ormat. We've got Ormat, we've got a potential lithium mine, and we have development all taking place on top of the water table there with the new subdivision. And it feels like all these projects fighting one at a time. Is that the best way do we need to take a step back and do a thorough impact report?

Mr. Brown said you have to be careful, because as the Commissioner knows, Open Meeting Law requires comment to be directed on the agenda topics. The topic, in this case, is Ormat, then you're really not supposed to come in and talk about other issues, even though they may not be the only one. So for the purposes of the meeting on that's coming up, I would advise you to direct your comments on Ormat.

Ms. Gambrell said with that noted, manager Brown, Open Meeting Law also has a public comment at the beginning and end of the meeting. If you choose to share something outside of what's on the agenda, that opportunity is also available. Mr. Brown said that is correct. There you go.

Commissioner Herman said you may also speak three times on the same subject. Don't be afraid to do

all three public comments.

9. 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)

Ms. Ramos provided a brief update of the HUB site.

10. 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)

Chair Walters said I just want to say first that our April CAB will technically be canceled. We're going to do more of a community style town hall meeting. Dave Solaro wants to come and discuss all the growth and planning updates for Gerlach. It'll be just same time, just not agendized.

Mr. Moore said Commissioner Herman, congratulations on your reelection. I believe that was November. I've heard commentary from a couple people in town, just wondering if you were interested in taking down your election sign, which is still mounted in Main Street. Commissioner Herman said I thought it had been taken down.

Commissioner Herman said I came to this meeting by zoom just to make sure I was up to date with you, folks. You handle your meetings beautifully. I am looking forward to the Ormat issue coming up at our board meeting. So I'll look forward to seeing you all there.

Ms. Evans said I just want to say thank you to Chairman Phoenix for the tribes support that having these folks here is like a game changer for us. We are so appreciative of it. Thank you for whatever the Tribe did to make that happened. And obviously Fiber Internet is another wonderful thing for this town. We really appreciate it.

Ms. Evans said Candy, I had messaged you and Tina after the last Leadership Academy about the having someone from County Roads because of what Dave Solera was telling me about 34 and kind of plans in the works and I just wanted to make sure that was still on your radar.

Ms. Ramos said absolutely. In fact, I just followed up with Eric Crump, who's our Roads Director today. And I did say, I realized because they're so busy with the sandbagging and making sure that everything is clear as far as flooding, but I did remind him that it's definitely something that we still want to keep on our radar. And because April is canceled, I'm proposing to have him in May.

Ms. Evans said Dave told me such interesting things, but no urgency. My second thing, I saw this thing today about prescription drug take back program. Apparently, on April 22, there's a whole bunch of places that are going to be doing that. And apparently, the Washoe County Sheriff's Office in Reno is a location that does that all year long. Is there a way we could have something like that once a year here? That would be amazing. Ms.

Ramos said we will look into that. I will definitely check in with the sheriff's office, or Northern Nevada hopes or a partner like that to see about safe medication removal.

Ms. Gambrell asked should we look at inviting Northern Nevada hopes up here, they used to do the annual health fair, but then that grant got cancelled, but I do know, they still provide a lot to the community. And I think they still come out to the senior center occasionally. Maybe we should look at having one of them come out and see what programs we can set up because I know there's people in neighborhoods who do need needle disposal kits and things like that. Ms. Ramos said I will definitely follow up with them about whatever services they might be able to offer.

11. 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)

Don Pelt, Paiute Fire Chief, said I'd like to thank Chairman Phoenix for coming up here with us tonight and having Commissioner Herman and County Manager, Eric Brown on. It's great to see us working like this together. Just quick rundown for you from the fire department. Last month was a very nice month, we only had five calls. Four of those were medical; one was an illegal fire that we took care of. Things are going well. We are in talks right now with the county manager's office about potentially adding a fire marshals' position to the department that can help serve with investigations and inspections for both the Gerlach/Empire community and the Tribe. We hope to know more that in the future, but that's something we're looking into. The Tribe is also looking into a grant from the US Forestry division. Because our area is now so large and so rural, they have a grant that may potentially provide us some additional personnel. And we are thinking of trying to ask for two additional people per shift for the Gerlach station so that we would have a captain and three firefighters per shift if we can get it approved. And that's on a five-year continually rotating grant. With that, we would be able to meet two in and two out rules on any structure fires even though other fire trucks would be coming from Nixon. We would automatically be right there to do what needs to be done. In addition to that, we're also working with NV Energy, through the Tribe, to create a fuels mitigation program with the power company to protect the infrastructure. And that would also include not only the tribal areas, but the Gerlach/Empire/Vya areas where there are power lines. Because the last thing we want is people to be out of their power if there's a wildfire, so we're working on that. Next, Ms. Schatzi has asked that we come up and address a town hall meeting is it going to be in May to address specifically the ambulance saver program, how it works. Apparently, there's some confusion because folks are used to the old REMSA Silver Saver program, and those are two different things. So we want to come up and meet with the community and discuss what's different about them. And we also want to get a representative from REMSA to come up because the Silver Saver and the care flight program are still valid things that you should have. You do go to town from time to time, and they would be the responding area out there. Or if you get the helicopter that would be responding. So we'll bring those up, so that we can get those answered. We did put it in the last issue of the Gerlach newsletter. We're picking up stragglers here and there on the ambulance saver. We'd like to get it get it going.

Regarding your concerns for old medications and used syringes for those who are diabetic and such, we're a public safety organization, you have those things, you want them out of your house, you can bring them to the fire department, my firefighters will take them, we will dispose of them. You don't have to worry about that. I don't want you to worry about a special day every year. We're here 24/7, 365. Bring them to us, we'll take care of it. If you need additional Sharps containers will help you with that too. Last, on July 22, the department will be doing an open house and barbecue for the community. We hope everyone can attend. Ms. Walters asked about the smoking power pole. Chief Pelt said we've been out there twice in two days. NV Energy is aware of it. They are dealing with it but they think they're letting it burn itself to where they could get it taken care of. But I know the crew up here this afternoon did finally shut it off long enough to them to get some water on to hopefully stop it from smoking. We're aware of that. And we are continuing to watch it with NV energy. It's right around mile marker 66.

Karl Kopec said I just wish to observe the passing of cowboy Carl Brooker, who services Monday at 10. Anybody who wishes to attend he was known and beloved in the community and spent a lot of time up here and will be deeply missed. He worked for Burning Man for many years and helped bridge the gap between the local community and the Burning Man community. He brought a lot of experience, strength, and wisdom to the Burning Man community. That was greatly appreciated. Thank you, Commissioner, for your work with the Ormat situation. Everyone here are pulling on the same rope and we're working toward that solution. The memorial is at the Veterans Cemetery in Fernley at 1pm.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.