



Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board held on August 2, 2023, at 6:00 P.M. Spanish Springs Library (7100 Pyramid Lake Highway)

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM [Non-Action Item] Bruce Parks, Brandon Partain, Sharon Thygesen(online), Bradley Young, Bonnie Billings, Shannon Martell, Adam De Merit

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE [Non-Action Item]

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2022-2023 – [For Possible Action]

Bruce Parks nominated himself as Chair. Bradly Young seconds. The motion passed unanimously.

Bonnie Billings was nominated as Vice Chair by Bruce Parks. Bradly Young seconds. The motion passed unanimously.

4. 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 CAB as a whole.

Tom Green introduces himself as a candidate for County Commissioner in District 4. He mentions his experience working at the Sheriff's Office and as a private investigator. He addresses rumors about tracking the mayor's car and emphasizes the need for transparency in government, trust in elections, and addressing the homeless issue. He also mentions a fundraiser on August 21st and invites people to learn more about him on his website.

Tracy Hilton-Thomas announced her candidacy for County Commissioner District 4 and discussed her experience in working elections. Tracy Hilton-Thomas highlighted the need to address staffing in the Sheriff's Department and the City of Sparks.

Valerie Vinayaka – Our chair is well qualified.

Mark Neumann discussed the Senior Specter magazines and the questionnaire for addressing senior citizen problems in the future. Mark Neumann mentioned a new volunteer program for senior citizens.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF April 5, 2023. [For Possible Action]

The minutes of the previous meeting held on April 5th, 2023, are discussed. It is mentioned that there was no quorum for the June meeting, so no minutes were recorded for that meeting. A motion is made to approve the minutes, and it is seconded. The motion is passed unanimously.

6. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES – General community updates from public safety representatives; including but not limited to Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, and others as such. [NonAction Item]

Truckee Meadows Fire District

The Truckee Meadows Fire District provides updates on public safety. The incidents for June and July are discussed, including fires, EMS calls, vehicle accidents, hazmat, and pulse calls. The NV Energy wildland fuels crew's work in the Palomino area is mentioned, as well as the current fire season in other states.

Fire season is starting to pick up in other states. The team is fully staffed for the first time in a couple of years. The team has reached the drawdown limits to ensure they can still support everything in case of an emergency.

A new real-time software on the emergency manager's website allows for drawing and uploading evacuation zones. Code Red provides phone call or text message notifications for evacuations. The sheriff's office and CERT team assisted with evacuations a couple of hours into the incident. The Alert Nevada program includes fire cameras in different areas.

Citizen – Why is it a bad idea to evacuate late?

Answer – We need to get in to fight the fire. People are watching the fire and blocking the roads.

Captain from the Sheriff's Office

The speaker has been promoted to captain with the Sheriff's Office and assigned to the Valley Patrol Division. The captain aims to improve communication and share pertinent information about the Sheriff's Office and the community.

There were 426 self-initiated activities by police officers in the area. The total contacts in quarter two were 1,798, which is significantly higher than the three-year average of 1,400. In quarter two, there were 502 calls for service in the Spanish Springs area.

They mention that 22 people graduated from the last academy. They mention that there are 21 cadets in the current academy. They discuss the time lag involved in hiring and training new staff members. They mention implementing a program to put new staff members off of FTO into high call volume times.

They discuss the challenges involved in towing and disposing of abandoned vehicles. They mention the implementation of an abandoned vehicle program. They mention the search for a plot of land to store abandoned vehicles.

They discuss the search and rescue team's role in door-to-door notifications and marking houses. They mention working with the fire department and the emergency operations center to streamline the evacuation process.

Law enforcement uses the Perimeter Program to develop door-to-door plans. The Perimeter Program allows the fire chief to designate an area and share it on an app. The program can be accessed through the www.washoesherriff.com website.

There are seven community advisory boards corresponding to these districts. Unincorporated areas in Washoe County belong to the sheriff's office and are divided into cab districts.

A patrol academy is scheduled to start on August 21st for new recruits. There are officers in training and due to be certified on specific dates.

Clinical mental health workers ride with officers to handle mental health calls. Field training officers and mental health workers are present to assist police officers.

The number of officers dispatched to an accident scene depends on the situation. Sending two or three officers to an accident is not policy, but it can happen based on availability and the nature of the incident.

Grant funding has not been explored in the last three months, but the Sun Valley GID has allocated funds for cleanup in that area.

7. SPEAKUP/ECOMMENT – Assistant to the County Manager Erick Willrich to present information on E-Comment, which allows citizens to provide public comment electronically on county issues and Board of County Commissioner meeting agenda items. [Non-Action Item]

Erick Willrich demonstrated how to access the agenda, view meetings, leave comments, and register to speak. The register-to-speak option is for providing public comment in chambers and does not currently have a virtual option. Public comments are live and become part of the permanent record.

The assistant described the advantage of using e-comment, which allows users to leave comments on specific board items.

Erick Willrich explained the process of signing up for the platform, which requires providing first name, last name, email, and address. Comments must be made using the user's name and are visible to everyone.

The Citizen Outreach Program provides an opportunity for individuals to provide their voice on any item even if they cannot attend a Board of County Commission meeting. The program does not replace any existing options for public comment and is an addition to the current methods.

If a person registers to speak online ahead of time, they will be placed first in the queue to speak at the Commission Chambers. Registering online does not replace the option to provide public comments in person during the meeting. The e-comment system closes at 4 o'clock the day before the Board of County Commission meeting.

The address information is not shared with the public but is used for statistical purposes. The address information helps identify the location of comments and questions to determine the majority and address specific items.

8. TRUCKEE MEADOWS PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT ACT (AKA LANDS BILL) – City of Sparks Mayor Ed Lawson and Washoe County Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas to provide information on the Lands Bill – where it's been, where it is, and where it's going. [Non-Action Item]

Kate Thomas was introduced by Commissioner Andriola.

The Land Use Bill will have a significant impact on District 4. The Land Use Bill will determine the fate of federal parcels, including preservation, disposal, and allocation to local governments and tribal communities. The Land Use Bill involves multiple governmental entities and aims to address the management and designation of federally owned lands in the region.

The speaker explains the process of disposing of public lands, including the need for strategic planning, local land use laws, and federal environmental review. The speaker discusses the allocation of proceeds from land sales to different community funds, such as supporting the Truckee River and general education. She emphasizes that disposal properties must comply with zoning and land use requirements, preventing inappropriate development. Commissioner Andriola talks about the designation and management of wilderness study areas, national conservation areas, special management areas, and cultural heritage areas.

The participants discussed the bill, which has two parts: the conservation element and the disposal or urban element. They talked about conveyance to local government, economic development sales, and specific areas for public purposes like shooting facilities. They also mentioned the public comment period and the process of fine-tuning the draft map.

Mayor Ed Lawson

The speaker provides statistics on job numbers and population in Story County, highlighting the imbalance and the anticipated growth. The speaker discusses the negative impact of rising house prices on the younger generation, leading to their inability to afford living in the area. The speaker expresses concern that the tax system issue is unlikely to be fixed because of the resistance to tax increases. The speaker explains the suggested solution to the tax issue, which involves resetting property taxes upon the sale of a house. The speaker acknowledges the lack of proper planning in terms of the commercial and residential mix in the city, leading to financial challenges. The speaker explains the financial impact of residential growth and the time it takes for houses to stop generating enough revenue to cover services.

The speaker emphasizes the importance of growth to address the challenges caused by Story County's job growth. The speaker emphasizes the need for growth due to the inability to solve the tax issue. He expresses the need for growth due to the increasing number of jobs in Story County. Mayor Ed expresses their passion and concern about the landfill issue, which is related to the city's growth and future.

The ABDC land was mentioned as an area for workforce housing, which encourages infill development. It was mentioned that currently, only 500 acres and above are available for purchase in Story County, but the proposal aims to offer smaller parcels of land, starting from 10 acres. The discussion highlighted the intention to focus on industrial development rather than residential development due to the current imbalance.

The plan was to create a residential overlay in the industrial area, allowing future conversion of industrial land into residential land when it becomes more valuable. The benefits of having people living along the river were discussed, including keeping the river clean and attracting more economic development.

The discussion also covered the proposed road infrastructure, its environmental impact, and the potential benefits it would bring, such as reducing carbon emissions, providing a direct route to USA Parkway, and offering a safe outlet for commuters. From the time the Lands Bill passes, it will take about 5 years to build the road.

The participants discussed the projected growth of the company in terms of employee count over the next 15 years. They mentioned other companies like Google and Microsoft and the increasing number of new businesses. They also talked about the issue of bringing in employees from Silicon Valley and the high cost of housing in the area.

The participants discussed the issue of water availability and its impact on the price center. They mentioned the limited water supply and the restrictions on its usage if the Truckee River drops to a certain level. They also talked about the importance of river preservation and proposed ideas to make the Truckee River more accessible and enjoyable for everyone. Additionally, they discussed the idea of creating a spawning ground for trout and the educational opportunities it would provide.

The participants discussed the concept of city centers and their connection with public transportation. They mentioned the plan to create higher-density areas in downtown Sparks, where people can live close

to entertainment centers and have easy access to amenities. They emphasized the long-term benefits of this approach and the potential boost it would provide to the county's economy.

The participants discussed the importance of access to federal lands for recreational activities and leisure. They mentioned the need for unrestricted access to federal lands and expressed concerns about the addition of conservation as a potential restriction. They highlighted the economic benefits of supporting recreation and leisure areas, including mining, grazing, and tourism.

Mave Ambros – Up Pyramid Highway, you can find all the storage units for RV's. They are all reaching capacity. The people in Spanish Springs value recreation and leisure time and would like unrestricted access to federal lands. There is no mechanical access to many of these areas. Upwards of 5000 people come out to moonrocks during holiday weekends. I think we should consider supporting this recreation and leisure.

Larry Chesney - Where do you get the funding for the bypass road?

Answer – It comes from the sale of the land itself.

Citizen - Do you see Sparks outgrowing Reno?

Answer – No.

Tracy Hilton-Thomas - It was clarified that Spanish Springs is currently at capacity, but there are plans to build another sewer plant to the east to increase capacity and allow for more growth.

Answer - The discussion touched on the release of clean water into the Truckee River and the need for affordable housing.

The discussion revolved around the fair market value of the land and the plans for zoning and development. The intention is to bring all the land into the city of Sparks and annex it. It was mentioned that the land to the east of Sparks is intended for industrial development, with a potential exception for housing if an MOU can be reached with Story County for police and fire services. The need for affordable housing options was also discussed.

Citizen – What is your plan for affordable housing?

Answer – I do not have an answer for that. A 2x2 is the same price as a 4. The market value of the homes on the river will be the market value.

Citizen – What tax impact are we going to see when this is built?

Answer – It depends on what businesses move in.

9. CAB MEMBER/COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS — This item is limited to announcements, requests for future agenda items, or discussion by CAB members and/or Commissioner(s). [Non-Action Item]

Commissioner Andriola- As things change, things will be updated on the County Website. Thanks everybody for coming.

Commissioner Herman – My district will have to pay for this when the bill goes through. People are not going to be able to use this land for its desolate properties. This bill will destroy this area and citizens' ability to enjoy it. Millions of dollars will not come into this county if this bill passes.

10. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT – Limited to no more than three (3) minutes. Anyone may speak pertaining to any matter either on or off the agenda. The public are requested 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]

David Weeks – The speaker expressed concerns about the potential negative impact of the land bill on wildlife preservation, including the disruption of migration corridors, destruction of food sources, and limited access to water.

Cynthis Benedick – Expresses concern about the placement of parcels. The apartments are at the top of a hill. The parking lot will be in the middle of our neighborhood. The park itself will be behind us. They express concerns about the park attracting people and wildlife, which could impact the residents' quality of life. The residents raised concerns about the potential drilling of bedrock for the park, which could harm their wells, septic, and homes. The participants express concerns about the Lands bill and suspect that property trading between areas has resulted in Washoe County being negatively affected.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Meeting Summary

In the meeting, Mark Newman discussed the Senior Specter magazines and a new volunteer program for senior citizens. Tracy Hilton-Thomas announced her candidacy for County Commissioner District 4 and highlighted the need to address staffing in the Sheriff's Department and the City of Sparks. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unanimously. Updates on public safety were provided by the Truckee Meadows Fire District, including incidents and staffing updates. Evacuation and emergency management procedures were discussed, including the use of Code Red notifications and a new real-time software for drawing evacuation zones. The meeting also covered law enforcement reports, staffing updates, abandoned vehicles, and the introduction of the Citizen Outreach Program. The Land Use Bill, city growth, tax system, and land disposal and management were discussed. Concerns were raised about growth, infrastructure, sewage treatment plants, affordable housing, land zoning, and the impact of the landfill. The meeting also addressed job market and economic development concerns, conservation of wild lands, highway construction, and the impact of the land bill on wildlife preservation. Concerns were expressed about a proposed park in a neighborhood and property trading in Washoe County.