



Incline Village/Crystal Bay Citizen Advisory Board

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Incline Village/Crystal Bay Citizen Advisory Board held on May 22, 2024, at 5:30 P.M. Incline Village Library (845 Alder Ave. Incline Village, NV 89451)

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

PRESENT- Kevin Lyons, Roxanna Dunn, Denise Davis, Diane Becker

ABSENT- Chris Wood, Carla Werner (At-Large Alternate)

A quorum was established, and the meeting was brought to order.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Helen Neff addressed the CAB with concerns primarily focused on transportation and safety. She highlighted that despite the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners approving the Tahoe Area Transportation Plan over a year ago, many of the safety improvements outlined have not been implemented. She noted that while various plans and amendments, such as the Vision Zero plan, aim to create walkable town centers, transportation plans going back 10 years with similar recommendations remain unfulfilled.

Neff expressed frustration that the plans exist but are not being realized, leading to unsafe conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. She raised specific questions about the status of the public outreach for the Crystal Bay to Incline Village bike path and questioned why this pathway, which will primarily serve tourists, received funding before safety related projects in town centers. She also inquired about the progress on other safety-related projects, such as the multi-use paths in Incline Village, the dangerous intersections at Northwood and Southwood, and crosswalk restriping, particularly near schools.

Additionally, Neff pointed out issues with the bike lanes on State Route 28, where insufficient width makes cycling unsafe. She concluded by requesting a presentation on how funds allocated for Main Street revitalization are being spent, emphasizing the need for improved safety measures in the community.

Emily Stapleton, a member of the Washoe County Sustainability Team, spoke about the development of Washoe County's first Community Climate Action Plan, which aims for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. She emphasized the importance of community feedback in creating a plan that reflects the diverse needs of the county.

Stapleton outlined two ways for the community to provide input: participating in an online Clean Air Survey, available until July 3rd, and attending a series of listening sessions in June. These sessions include an in-person meeting at the Incline Village Library on June 20th and virtual sessions on June

3rd and June 26th. Additional in-person sessions will be held at libraries in North Valleys, Sparks, and South Valleys.

She explained that the Reno area is the fastest warming metro in the U.S., with significant impacts on public health and the environment. The primary sources of emissions are transportation and energy use in buildings, followed by waste and water management. Stapleton stressed the need for equitable solutions that support vulnerable populations and rural communities. She encouraged widespread participation in these feedback opportunities and directed people to the County's Sustainability website for more information.

Alexandra Wilson from the Washoe County Commissioner Support Team announced that the Washoe County Leadership Academy is now accepting applications until June 21st. Interested individuals can apply through the website at washoecounty.gov/wcla. She mentioned that digital flyers would be sent to CAB members and anyone else interested, encouraging CAB members to apply.

Wilson highlighted the unique experiences offered by the Leadership Academy, including visits to Incline Village, Gerlach, and the Playa, where Burning Man takes place. Additionally, participants will experience a "Birth to Death" day, where they explore Washoe County's involvement in citizens' lives from birth records to the medical examiner's office and even the public administrator's role in managing deceased property without wills or trusts. She invited anyone seeking more information to contact her, noting that CAB members already have her contact details.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSIONER HILL

Commissioner Hill had some conflicting engagements and was not able to attend the meeting.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Tia Rancourt from North Lake Tahoe Fire provided several updates. She informed the audience that their chipping and defensible space inspections services are currently available, with registration accessible online at NLTFPD.org. She also mentioned the successful BurnBot demonstration event held on May 1st, which was well-received and involved multiple agency partners. More information, including a video and press release, will be released soon.

Rancourt shared an update from Chief Sommers, who has been in discussions with delegates in Washington, DC, to find solutions for the community's insurance challenges. She distributed flyers related to these efforts and indicated that ongoing updates will be provided as the conversations progress.

Additionally, Rancourt announced a community pancake breakfast on July 2nd at Station 11 from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM, inviting everyone to join before the parade. Lastly, she mentioned that while fire restrictions have not yet been announced, the department is closely monitoring the weather. Currently, open burning is still allowed under winter restrictions, with updates on fire restrictions expected soon.

A gentleman in the audience asked about chipping and how far is the range. Rancourt mentioned yes, a downed tree and no larger than 6 inches.

Kevin Lyons asked about how late the inspections could be done and the explanation of fire restrictions to see how it works. Rancourt mentioned until the fall through September and confirmed there will be an explanation on the understanding on what to do and why in case of a fire.

Kathie Julian asked about burn restrictions and if anyone had approached Raley's to stop selling charcoal if that happens and is it possible? The response was that the fire department actively visit local retailers, including gas stations and hardware stores, to coordinate safety measures, such as requesting them to pull charcoal from the shelves during fire-prone seasons. They noted that in previous summers, retailers were accommodating to these requests.

Amelia Galicia, the new captain over the patrol division for the Washoe County Sheriff's Office, introduced herself and informed the community that she is succeeding Captain Zirkel and Lieutenant Colacurcio, who are familiar faces at these meetings.

Galicia provided updates regarding the Sheriff's Office's preparations for the upcoming 4th of July holiday, acknowledging the busy nature of the weekend and the planned fireworks. The office is working on a plan to ensure safety and manage the influx of visitors to the area effectively.

Regarding crime trends for the first quarter of 2024, Galicia reported both increases and decreases in significant incidents. While there has been an uptick in aggravated assaults, including domestic violence and batteries with deadly weapons, there has also been an increase in arrests for these crimes, bringing some justice to the victims. On the positive side, vehicle, residential, and commercial burglaries are trending down, as are cases of destruction of property and vandalism. Fraud offenses are also down compared to the three-year average.

Specifically for Incline Village, she noted that burglaries, destruction of property, and fraud offenses have decreased compared to the three-year average. Galicia expressed confidence in the robust team assigned to Incline Village and encouraged community members to approach deputies and sergeants with any questions or concerns.

Pam Straley inquired about the enforcement of the ban on throttled e-bikes along Lakeshore and the enforcement of the 15 mph speed limit on the East Shore Trail. She asked whether these enforcement measures are currently in place or when they will be implemented. Galicia mentioned that there are representatives from Washoe County present who will be giving a presentation specifically addressing e-bikes and related laws in Incline Village and on the pathways. The Chair suggested that Pam wait until the presentation.

6. RENO HOUSING AUTHORITY

Dr. Hilary Lopez, Executive Director of the Reno Housing Authority, provided an overview of the organization's efforts and challenges in providing affordable housing within Washoe County. She highlighted the different projects under construction, such as those funded by ARPA, which aim to provide housing for homeless or at-risk veterans and middle-income families. Dr. Hilary also touched on the challenges faced by the housing authority, including high land and building costs, expiring affordability of low-income housing tax credit properties, and the area's continued population growth with low vacancy rates.

Dr. Hilary concluded by emphasizing the Reno Housing Authority's mission to provide affordable housing and a stable foundation for lower-income community members to achieve their goals. She encouraged people to visit the Reno Housing Authority's website for more information on available programs and how to apply.

Roxanna Dunn raised several important questions regarding property and land challenges in the area. She noted that land in the region is scarce and expensive, making it difficult to develop affordable housing. Roxanna inquired whether the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) has been acquiring existing properties as a way to open up more possibilities for affordable housing.

Additionally, she proposed the idea of the RHA purchasing land and then leasing it to developers. This strategy could potentially enable developers to create affordable housing without the pressure to build expensive condominiums, which is a common trend in the area. Roxanna asked if this approach is part of the RHA's toolkit for addressing housing challenges. Dr. Lopez responded to Roxanna Dunn's questions by indicating that the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) is indeed exploring a variety of strategies to address property and land challenges. The RHA is open to acquiring existing properties and considering creative solutions, such as purchasing land and leasing it to developers. However, the feasibility of these strategies depends on factors like property costs and financing. The RHA is willing to explore these options to expand affordable housing opportunities.

Kevin Lyons asked about the efforts, for addressing some of the root challenges, and things that TRPA is now aware of and trying to address in terms of coverage and height restrictions. Dr. Hilary responded to Kevin Lyons's question by explaining that the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) works closely with local jurisdictions like Washoe County to address root challenges related to affordable housing, such as coverage and height restrictions. While the RHA doesn't directly administer or develop zoning codes, they do provide input and collaborate with staff from various jurisdictions. This collaboration includes working on the implementation of recent state legislation aimed at incentivizing and expediting affordable housing developments.

Diane Becker, the chair of the meeting, emphasized the critical need for workforce housing in Incline Village. She highlighted the challenges faced by the community, including the high cost of land and housing, which often leads to the conversion of developments intended for affordable housing into luxury condominiums. She urged the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) to remain vigilant in ensuring that any amendments to the Tahoe Area Plan genuinely support affordable and workforce housing rather than being diverted to luxury developments.

Diane pointed out that a significant portion of the local workforce, particularly those in hospitality, supermarkets, and other essential services, cannot afford to live in the area due to skyrocketing rents. She stressed the importance of providing multi-family rental housing targeted at the lowest-income workers, as opposed to middle-income housing, to address the community's most pressing needs.

Finally, she suggested that the RHA collaborate with local organizations, such as churches, to better reach and inform lower-income residents about available housing programs. Diane also offered to share more detailed information with the RHA to help them better understand and address the unique housing challenges in Incline Village.

Helen Neff raised concerns about the low demand for housing vouchers in Incline Village, noting that many people who can't afford the high rents relocate to Reno or Carson City. Some of these individuals still work in Incline Village and face long, costly commutes, which adds to vehicle miles on the roads and environmental strain. She emphasized the need to get the word out to those who may be eligible for housing support but are unaware of it.

Helen suggested that the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) partner with local organizations like Tahoe Family Solutions, Sierra Community House, and churches, particularly the Catholic Church and New Life Church, to reach residents in need. She also mentioned United in Action, which has helped individuals facing eviction find housing, as well as the Incline Village Business Association (IVBCA), whose members face challenges like a lack of workforce availability due to long commutes. She cited an example where snow removal was delayed because workers living outside the area couldn't manage the tough conditions.

In response, the RHA representative offered to pass on their contact information and suggested that their admissions staff could meet with local groups to explain the housing programs, addressing potential misunderstandings about eligibility and encouraging more applications.

Hans Keller, who has worked in the constable's office for 26 years, expressed his concern about the lack of a good relationship between the justice system and housing assistance programs. His role often involved evicting people, a task he found heartbreaking, particularly in bad weather. As he's running for justice of the peace, he is keen on finding ways to better support those facing eviction. Hans inquired about the Emergency Eviction Program, which was mentioned during the meeting, asking how people could sign up for it and how referrals could be made. He emphasized the urgency, noting that in Nevada, eviction can occur rapidly, sometimes within seven days.

In response, it was explained that the Reno Housing Authority funds the Emergency Eviction Program of Nevada. Those facing eviction can apply for assistance through the program's website. Depending on their situation, the program may help them find new housing, access emergency rental assistance, or explore other solutions.

Melissa Horton raised a question that seemed to address the Reno Housing Authority's efforts to recruit landlords for their housing programs. She was curious about whether there was a minimum duration for landlords to be enrolled in the program, likely referencing the commitment required from landlords to participate.

In response, it was clarified that while they do encourage landlords to get involved—highlighting the importance of available housing for voucher holders—there isn't a strict long-term commitment required. Landlords are typically asked for a minimum of a one-year lease, but there is no mandatory participation period such as five or ten years. The emphasis was on the flexibility of the program and the importance of having housing options available for those who receive vouchers and need to find suitable units for their families.

7. TRAIL USE

Eric Crump, the Director of Community Services, along with Christina Thayer the Trails Coordinator shared the vision and approach to managing multi-use paths in the region. He emphasized the importance of creating a positive and collaborative atmosphere, rather than focusing solely on prohibitions and strict enforcement. Crump highlighted the significance of managing behavior on trails instead of trying to regulate specific devices like e-bikes, which are increasingly difficult to distinguish from regular bikes.

In the presentation, it was discussed about the challenge of congestion on roads and the limited options for expanding bike lanes due to private property constraints. It was stressed the need for safety, especially for children, families, tourists, and commuters, and suggested that sending them onto busy streets would be detrimental. Instead, he advocated for the use of multi-use paths as an alternative form of transportation.

Crump also underscored the importance of regional continuity in long-term planning for these paths, advocating for consistent policies and messaging around the lake. He called for collaboration among neighbors to avoid isolated regulations that could create confusion.

Finally, he pointed out that speed is a key issue on these paths, and he recommended focusing on education campaigns rather than heavy enforcement to create a positive experience in the community. Crump expressed a desire for Incline Village to be known for its innovative solutions, stakeholder collaboration, and positive trail experiences, rather than for prohibitive rules and enforcement. He concluded by mentioning that the Sheriff's Department has its own program planned for the upcoming summer to address some of these issues.

A representative from the Sheriff's Office provided an update on the collaborative efforts between the Sheriff's Office and the county to enhance safety and education in the Tahoe Basin, particularly in Incline Village. The Sheriff's Office has established an E-bike team, equipped with specially outfitted E-bikes featuring emergency lights, to patrol and monitor the multi-use paths. This team is currently undergoing training to ensure they are fully prepared to operate the bikes safely and effectively.

The E-bike patrols are expected to become more visible on the trails after June, once the training is complete. The primary focus of these patrols will be on educating both residents and visitors about the rules and regulations governing the use of E-bikes and other devices on these paths. This education will extend to local businesses and rental shops to ensure that they are informed about the legal requirements and safety practices.

The representative emphasized that speed is a major concern on these paths, but enforcement of speed limits requires proper signage and data collection to determine appropriate limits. The Sheriff's Office is working in tandem with other county efforts to address these issues, and they are committed to an educational approach rather than immediate strict enforcement, recognizing that E-bikes are a newer technology that the community is still adapting to.

Kevin Lyons contributed to the discussion by raising concerns about the effectiveness of the proposed measures to control speeds on multi-use paths. He highlighted the challenge of determining what constitutes a "safe speed" for electric bicycles, given the lack of specific legal guidelines for these devices on pathways. Lyons pointed out that while Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) set a speed limit of 15 miles per hour for electric scooters on bicycle paths, there is no equivalent standard for electric bicycles, which creates ambiguity.

He and other participants discussed the importance of gathering more data on the speeds at which cyclists and electric bikers are currently traveling on these paths. They agreed that this data would be crucial in setting appropriate speed limits and developing effective messaging for users. Lyons mentioned that the law currently states that bicycles, including electric ones, should not be ridden on a bicycle trail in a manner that is unsafe or poses a danger to the rider or others. However, without clear speed limits, enforcement remains challenging.

Lyons suggested that public messaging could be focused on encouraging people to slow down, particularly when others are present on the pathway, similar to how drivers are expected to slow down when passing cyclists on a road without a shoulder. He also proposed using trail etiquette campaigns to promote this idea, emphasizing the importance of being a considerate and responsible trail user.

Diane Becker is expressing a strong disagreement with Kevin's previous remarks and emphasizes the need for enforcing speed limits, particularly for e-bikes and scooters. They argue that while messaging and education are important, they are insufficient on their own. Diane highlights the dangers posed by tourists, especially younger people, who may not adhere to etiquette on shared pathways, particularly in areas popular with visitors. She shares personal experiences of nearly being hit by cyclists and stress that law enforcement should focus on protecting the local residents by implementing and enforcing speed limits.

Diane also draws on their background in risk management, stressing that once a problem has been identified, as they believe this one has, appropriate measures—like enforcing speed limits—must be taken to protect the community. They acknowledge the value of educational campaigns but

insist that without enforcement, the risk remains high. Diane concludes by reiterating the importance of both education and enforcement to ensure the safety and well-being of the local population.

Roxanna highlights a significant challenge concerning local children who are starting to acquire e-bikes, particularly those in middle school. She notes that many of these kids have little to no biking experience due to the area's conditions, which aren't conducive to learning how to ride a bike at a younger age. This lack of experience means that some children are essentially going from training wheels directly to e-bikes, a transition that could be risky without proper education.

Roxanna proposes the idea of a training program aimed at both the kids and their parents. This program could be a brief but informative session, perhaps an hour or slightly longer, to educate them on safe riding practices and the responsibilities that come with using an e-bike. She sees this as a necessary step to ensure the safety of young riders and those around them. Roxanna's suggestion is directed toward those present at the meeting, indicating that she believes it's a matter worth exploring and addressing in the community. In response to Roxanna's concern about educating young e-bike users, the speaker addresses the ongoing efforts being made to implement an education campaign. This initiative, part of a collaboration with the Tahoe Fund, focuses on instilling proper etiquette and safety messaging among younger generations, particularly those in schools.

The campaign's first phase involved ensuring that everyone is on the same page regarding bike etiquette and messaging. The next phase aims to bring this education directly into schools, teaching children about bike safety and etiquette. Additionally, efforts are being made to engage local vendors, bicycle shops, and retailers to provide this essential information at the point of sale.

The speaker also mentions involvement with "People for Bikes," a national advocacy organization that focuses on bicycle policy, safety, and education. This partnership is working towards making manufacturers and retailers more accountable for educating users about the safe and responsible use of e-bikes and other devices.

8. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB

During the discussion on Item 8 regarding the Neighborhood Development Hub, Alexandra Wilson provided an update. She mentioned that there was a recent neighborhood development meeting concerning a private school in Incline Village, specifically involving Saint Claire's and the Village Presbyterian Church. This meeting was held in person only, without an online option.

Alexandra highlighted that those who could not attend the meeting in person still have the opportunity to submit feedback through a designated feedback tab. She noted that this option is particularly useful for individuals who may have been unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts. She also mentioned that project documents, including written comments and presentations, are available for review. Additionally, an MP3 audio recording of the neighborhood development meeting is accessible for those interested in catching up on the discussion.

9. BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS/DISCUSSION

There was none in this meeting.

10. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathie Julian asked Alexandra Wilson for clarification regarding two code changes related to Short-Term Rentals (STRs) that seemed to be connected to Incline Village.

Alexandra responded by explaining that one of the changes was a general code update concerning accessory dwelling units, which wasn't specifically relevant to Incline Village. This particular amendment dealt with updates to codes in areas like Sun Valley and Spanish Springs, focusing on issues such as two-story height restrictions and parking, which were more pertinent to those regions.

Regarding the second code change, Alexandra mentioned that it was related to Short-Term Rentals (STRs) and had occurred in November. This change involved two Zoom meetings that had received significant feedback, especially from residents of Incline Village. However, she noted that the meeting took place some time ago.

To ensure accuracy, Alexandra suggested that if there were further questions about the applicability of these code changes to Incline Village, it would be best to reach out to Cat Oakley, the planner responsible for the project.

11. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.