**Incline Village/Crystal Bay Citizen Advisory Board**

**Minutes of the regular meeting of the Incline Village/Crystal Bay Citizen Advisory Board held on April 28, 2025, 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, Christopher Wood, Denise Davis, Diane Becker (online)

ABSENT – Mark Sasway

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was recited

1. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mike O'Neill expressed concern about the crosswalk in front of Raley’s, stating that inadequate lighting and poor visibility nearly resulted in a tragic accident involving his family. He urged that the issue be added to a future agenda for further discussion, noting it has been raised before. Roxanna Dunn responded that she has requested an update from Dave Solaro[[1]](#footnote-2) on traffic safety priorities, including that specific crosswalk, and hopes to provide more information at the next meeting.

1. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISIONER HILL –**There was no announcements from Commissioner Hill.
2. **PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES**

Washoe County Sheriff’s Office
Sergeant Jeff McCaskill from the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office presented first-quarter public safety statistics for Incline Village and Crystal Bay, highlighting that while many crime trends remain stable or are declining, DUI incidents have increased. He noted that this rise is due to targeted enforcement aligned with the sheriff’s broader goal of reducing vehicle accidents. Roxanna Dunn asked for clarification on the DUI focus and requested that the report be shared publicly, including on the CAB website. Sergeant McCaskill agreed and offered to provide the report to Alexandra for posting and to anyone who requests it.

Denise Davis announced that the fire department is hosting a blood drive on May 8 at the fire station, with sign-ups available via Vitalant or a QR code on a flyer at the station. She also shared that the fire chief has established an email address for residents to report property insurance non-renewal notices. The purpose is to collect data—particularly from individual homeowners and HOAs—for submission to the State Department of Insurance, as state legislators remain unconvinced of the issue's scale. The email is not for resolving cases but solely for gathering statistics. Denise noted she would share the email address once she retrieved it (see page 6 of these minutes)

1. **DEFENSIBLE SPACE AND HOME HARDENING**Ryan Dominguez from the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District gave an in-depth overview of defensible space zones and wildfire prevention efforts in Incline Village. He explained the importance of maintaining three zones around properties—Zone 0 (0–5 feet), which should be ember-resistant and clear of flammable materials like firewood or debris; Zone 1 (5–30 feet), the "lean, clean, and green" area where vegetation should be minimized and maintained; and Zone 2 (30–100 feet), for those who have extended property, where fire should be slowed significantly before reaching structures. He praised the library for its compliance and emphasized the role of homeowners in reducing ground fuels to prevent fire spread. Dominguez announced the seasonal defensible space inspector would begin work soon, and reminded residents of the upcoming free chipping program, which starts May 12 and runs weekly through October; residents may sign up as many times as they need. He also highlighted the waste management sticker program for green waste disposal, running from May through mid-July and again in September. He stressed that homes with well-maintained defensible space allow fire crews to respond more aggressively and effectively. He noted year-round fuel reduction efforts, including hand crews and winter pile burning. Finally, Dominguez invited residents to participate in community wildfire preparedness events such as the Fourth of July pancake breakfast, a block party in Upper Tyner, and becoming part of a Fire Adapted or Firewise Community, which helps neighborhoods collectively prepare for wildfire through education, workdays, and partnerships with agencies.

Roxanna Dunn asked when the upcoming block party would be held, and Ryan Dominguez confirmed it will take place on Saturday, May 31, on Douglas Court in Upper Tyner. He encouraged interested residents to attend if they want to learn more about becoming fire-adapted community leaders. She also asked which types of open lots the fire crews address—those owned by IVGID, the state, or the U.S. Forest Service. Dominguez explained that they work with all three, coordinating through leadership across agencies to prioritize and fund treatments. He noted extensive collaboration and past work, including over 30 acres of prescribed burns and thinning projects. Dunn then asked whether he was the right contact for vegetation advice, mentioning that guidance from Marin County videos may not apply to higher elevation areas like Incline Village. Dominguez responded that his team does have brochures on suitable native plants and vegetation choices specific to the area. While he hadn’t brought materials to this meeting, he offered to provide them in the future or during property inspections. He also clarified that while manzanita may not seem dangerous, its dry litter burns intensely and spreads fire rapidly, making it a high-risk plant.

Program speaker Spencer Eusden, from the UNR Living with Fire program, joined the discussion with Mr. Dominguez and emphasized the importance of balancing fire safety with erosion control, especially to help keep Lake Tahoe blue. In response to concerns about vegetation removal, he recommended cutting shrubs like manzanita but leaving the roots in place to prevent soil erosion. He also advised maintaining a “mosaic pattern” in landscaping—spacing out shrubs in clusters rather than removing them all—to reduce fire risk while preserving soil stability. Ryan Dominguez added that when retaining shrubs in Zone 1 (5–30 feet from a structure), it’s important to maintain spacing between them—ideally twice the height of the shrub—to prevent fire from spreading continuously. In areas farther out (30–100 feet), more vegetation can be retained, but the goal remains to interrupt fire pathways. He emphasized that isolated shrubs like manzanita can burn intensely but briefly, while dense fields of it can sustain and spread fire through radiant heat and embers. Rather than removing all vegetation, the focus should be on strategic reduction. He added that manzanita regrows quickly, typically a foot per year, so most homeowners simply cut it flush and maintain it annually instead of removing roots.

During the Q&A session, Patricia Lord asked about the durability of tarps used to cover firewood near homes and whether there is a recommended brand, as well as whether tarps can be removed in the winter and replaced in summer. Ryan Dominguez responded that while there is no specific brand recommendation, the tarp must be NFPA[[2]](#footnote-3)-approved, which will be indicated on the product label. These are available online and may have been stocked locally at Ace Hardware in the past. He confirmed that removing tarps in winter is reasonable and advised replacing them when fire restrictions are in place, which typically begins around May 1. Patricia also inquired about reporting dead trees on U.S. Forest Service land near her home, and Dominguez advised contacting the Forest Service hotline directly. While it can be difficult to reach someone initially, they generally respond once contacted. He reiterated that NFPA-certified tarps will have visible tags or documentation for fire department verification.

Melissa, who lives in an HOA, expressed concern about her neighbor storing fuels near their home but within five feet of her property. The response advised her to request a property inspection so the team can assess both her property and the neighboring hazard. From there, they will contact the neighbor directly to address the issue.

Spencer Eusden, representing the University of Nevada, Reno’s Living with Fire Program, delivered a detailed presentation on wildfire preparedness, focusing on the two critical components of defensible space and home hardening. He emphasized that both are essential for protecting homes from wildfires, especially because most home losses are caused not by direct flame contact but by wind-driven embers that can ignite structures miles ahead of a fire front. While defensible space reduces fire intensity and supports firefighter access, home hardening addresses vulnerabilities that allow embers to ignite homes.

Eusden described various strategies for protecting homes, beginning with understanding how fire spreads. He explained that radiant heat and direct flame contact are risks, but embers are the main culprit in structural losses. He recommended a “coupled approach” that includes managing vegetation and modifying structures. Roofs, while important, are most vulnerable if made of wood shake. Otherwise, a roof in good condition with no gaps is generally sufficient. He engaged the audience by asking what they thought were the most vulnerable parts of the home. Answers included vents, eaves, and decks—all of which he confirmed as significant. Eusden addressed the importance of closing gaps where embers might settle, such as roof joints and under eaves. Metal flashing in these areas is an affordable and effective solution. Rain gutters should be made of non-combustible materials and kept clean to avoid ember buildup. Enclosing or soffiting eaves helps prevent rising heat from entering attics, but if that's not feasible, maintaining the zero-to-five-foot area around the house free of flammables is critical. Regarding vents, Eusden noted that simply adding an eighth-inch metal mesh behind existing vents can be very effective and cost-efficient, though higher-end options like Vulcan vents are also available. A question from Roxanna Dunn about spinning roof vents and V-shaped attic vents was addressed, with Eusden indicating that those areas are addressed in later slides.

He discussed the importance of fire-resistant siding and maintaining a six-inch non-combustible buffer at the base of exterior walls. For skylights and windows, he advised using tempered, multi-pane glass and minimizing combustible materials near openings. For decks, especially those close to the ground, he recommended cleaning underneath regularly and using metal flashing where the deck meets the structure. He also suggested replacing the first few deck boards with non-combustible material if a full deck replacement isn’t feasible. Garage doors and chimneys should be sealed properly, with gaps minimized and non-combustible screens used to prevent ember entry. Fences should have the five feet closest to the home made of non-combustible material to prevent fire from traveling structure to structure. Using fences as trellises for plants was discouraged due to the fire risk.

Throughout, Eusden provided practical, cost-sensitive tips for residents and stressed the importance of knowing where debris tends to accumulate around each property. He wrapped up by directing attendees to the Tahoe Living with Fire website, where a comprehensive home retrofit guide is available. The presentation included several questions, including why certain roofing materials are restricted in Nevada and whether simple mesh screening behind vents is sufficient. Eusden confirmed the mesh is effective and explained trade-offs in ventilation and fire safety.

During the subsequent Q&A session, Spencer Eusden addressed questions about plant guides, confirming that the “Choosing the Right Plant” guide is available online and currently being updated to reflect changes in nursery availability, with a new version expected later this year. He also confirmed the existence of a native plant guide and encouraged using local nurseries as a resource, noting that native plants are generally good choices if spaced appropriately. He strongly cautioned against planting ornamental junipers, calling them highly flammable and inappropriate for the 0–5-foot zone or even within 30 feet of a structure, citing their ability to ignite quickly and endanger nearby homes.

Diane Becker asked if Spencer Eusden could provide Alexandra Wilson[[3]](#footnote-4) with a copy of the presentation so that it may be added to the CAB website. He said that he would do that as well as send links for the publications that were mentioned during the presentation.

Roxanna Dunn asked what the most useful actions are before evacuating due to wildfire, and Spencer Eusden and Ryan Dominguez provided guidance based on both preparedness and operational experience. Eusden recommended having a pre-made evacuation checklist to help reduce stress and avoid forgetting essentials, as it’s common for people to forget critical items like identification while grabbing less necessary things. Roxanna shared steps from her own checklist—such as removing curtains and blinds, moving furniture away from windows, and closing interior doors—and asked if they were worth her time. Dominguez responded that while those steps can help, the priority should always be safety and swift evacuation. He emphasized exterior preparation, especially if there’s time: securing firewood, removing flammables near the home, and storing items like propane tanks appropriately.

He explained that when time is limited, focus should shift to grabbing important documents, ensuring pets and family are safe, and having pre-identified contacts or evacuation destinations ready. If there are a couple of days’ notice, then more detailed preparations inside and outside the home may be worthwhile, but in most cases, wildfire evacuations are fast-moving and require quick departure. Roxanna also asked about spraying down the house or leaving buckets of water or sprinklers running. Dominguez advised against spraying the house as not effective and against leaving sprinklers running because they can reduce water pressure needed by firefighters who rely on hydrants. He stressed that fire crews are equipped to manage those needs and that running sprinklers could hinder their efforts. He concluded by reminding residents to be prepared, stay alert, and act quickly when evacuation orders are given.

Roxanna Dunn read a Zoom chat comment by Christy. Christy asked whether Trex decking is fireproof and what alternative materials could be used. Ryan Dominguez responded that some types of Trex decking are approved for fire resistance, but it's important to ensure you're using the right kind. He noted that most contractors are familiar with the fire safety codes and should be able to guide homeowners in selecting compliant decking materials for upgrades.

Roxanna Dunn read a Zoom chat comment for Pamela Tsigdinos. Pamela asked whether there are any approved, permeable, and natural ground cover options that balance fire safety, erosion control, and lake protection, since grass is difficult to maintain and fertilizer is harmful to the lake, while bare dirt creates dust problems. Spencer Eusden responded that the best solution depends on the defensible space zone. In the 0–5-foot zone, TRPA recommends non-combustible hardscape like gravel or rock, which also aligns with fire safety standards. In the 30–100-foot zone, pine needles are actually beneficial for erosion control and can remain as long as they don’t exceed a 3-inch depth. The 5–30-foot zone can include a mix of patchy vegetation, rocks, and shrubs—what he called a mosaic design—so long as there are no continuous fuels. Ryan Dominguez added that during seasonal cleanups, particularly in spring and fall, residents should clear excess pine needles while preserving the duff layer, a decomposed organic material that’s better than exposed dirt. He advised sweeping material back to the 30-foot mark and adjusting cleanup timing based on winter conditions—if it’s dry into October or November, cleaning is still important due to ongoing fire risk; if there’s early snowfall, further cleanup may not be needed.

Roxanna Dunn asked a question for Melissa. Melissa asked whether there are any exceptions in Nevada law that allow homeowners to override HOA rules requiring wood siding and prohibiting metal roofs in order to fireproof their homes. Ryan Dominguez responded that no such legal exceptions exist, and compliance with HOA guidelines is between the homeowner and the HOA. However, he emphasized that his office is willing to work directly with HOAs by conducting property walks and defensible space assessments to educate board members and discuss fire mitigation strategies. Spencer Eusden added that this is a valuable opportunity for education, especially since many large HOAs are now facing serious insurance challenges due to wildfire risk. He noted that fire districts and wildfire experts can help make the case to HOAs by tying mitigation actions directly to improve insurability. He stressed that all recommendations being provided are grounded in research from the Insurance Institute for Building and Home Safety, making them well-supported and persuasive in such conversations.

Alex Tsigdinos asked whether a thin layer of wood chips is acceptable as ground cover. Spencer Eusden responded that while wood chips are flammable and not appropriate in the 0–5-foot zone near structures, small, strategic patches used away from the home and not connected to other fuels can be acceptable. Ryan Dominguez added that in the 30–100-foot zone, wood chips are similar to pine needles—acceptable if kept under 3 inches deep—but still risky near structures. He cautioned that during high-wind events, like the Caughlin Ranch Fire, smoldering mulch beds have caused flames to spread quickly to nearby vegetation, so wood chips should be avoided close to homes.

Ryan Dominguez added that his office also handles tree permitting and can assess fire risks for trees located within 5 to 10 feet of a structure. They can issue permits for the removal of hazardous or dying trees, even if they are not completely dead, either through an online request or during a property visit.

Denise Davis provided the email address for reporting property insurance non-renewal notices. If anyone receives such a notice, they can send it to **insurancerenewal@nltfpd.net**, which goes to the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District.

1. **NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Roxanna Dunn and Denise Davis announced that on Wednesday, the 30th, there will be multiple important meetings. One is the final workshop on the Washoe Tahoe Area Plan amendments, which will cover proposed changes to height, density, coverage, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in the town center. Another meeting will be at the Chateau and will be hosted by the Tahoe Transportation District and focus on the Connections 2050 report, including topics like mobility hubs, safe streets, parking restrictions, road improvements, and the East Shore Trail extension.

Roxanna Dunn asked if the meeting about the CAB reimagining is open to the public, and Alexandra Wilson confirmed that it is. The meeting will take place tomorrow from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the County Commission Chambers and via Zoom, and it will focus on proposed changes to the ordinance that governs CABs. These changes include aligning CAB boundaries, so each is represented by one Commissioner and allowing applications to be kept on file. Alexandra clarified that the goal is to have one Commissioner per CAB, not necessarily one CAB per Commissioner. She added that the Washoe Tahoe Academy also kicks off Wednesday evening, which may impact attendance at other events. She reminded the group of the Tahoe Area Plan update workshop happening the same evening at the Chateau from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and noted a public information open house in partnership with NDOT regarding State Route 28, including updates on the Spooner Transit Hub, watercraft inspection station, and corridor improvements. She mentioned that the meeting agenda contains a QR code linking to the Incline Village and Crystal Bay engagement page, where residents can submit feedback and suggest CAB topics. Finally, she announced several board and commission openings: one on the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission, which closes May 2 and is open to all county residents; one on the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife, which closes May 9; and one on the Board of Adjustment for District 4, which closes April 30 and is open to residents of Sparks, Spanish Springs, Sun Valley, and parts of East Truckee Canyon.

Denise Davis asked Alexandra Wilson for a list of agenda items for the upcoming Board of Adjustment meeting on Thursday concerning Incline Village. Alexandra responded that she didn’t have the agenda in front of her at the moment but could look it up if given a little time.

Diane Becker expressed concern about two significant proposed changes to the CAB ordinance. First, she noted the proposed deletion of the requirement for written meeting minutes, which she believes are a valuable record of public input and community concerns, especially in Incline Village and Crystal Bay. She praised Alexandra Wilson for the current use of AI-assisted minutes and urged others to comment if they value this documentation. Second, she pointed out the removal of due process language that currently gives CAB members notice and a reason if they are being removed, including access to closed session minutes related to their removal. Diane asked Alexandra whether the removal of the written minutes requirement means minutes will no longer be taken or if it will be left to someone's discretion. Alexandra responded that she was not aware of any intention to eliminate minutes and agreed to review the section.

\*\*Alexandra Wilson clarified during Item 9 that the language about written minutes was removed from the CAB ordinance draft because it's already required under Nevada's Open Meeting Law. She explained that this change was simply to avoid duplication and assured attendees that minutes and records would still be provided for all CAB meetings. Diane Becker thanked her for the clarification.

Roxanna Dunn reminded attendees that an online questionnaire regarding proposed changes to the Tahoe Area Plan is available, and the deadline to submit input is Friday. Flyers with the link are available on the table, and she said she would also post the link in the chat. Kevin Lyons clarified that while it's commonly called a survey, it's technically a questionnaire, as it's open to everyone and not a scientifically sampled survey.

1. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF February 24, 2025, AND March 24, 2025**

Roxanna Dunn thanked Alexandra Wilson and staff for putting together meeting minutes during 2025. In addition, she thanked Chris Wood for compiling the CAB’s inputs to those minutes.

Chris Wood motioned to approve the minutes for February 24, 2025, and March 24, 2025, Incline Village/Crystal Bay. Kevin Lyons seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

1. **BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS/DISCUSSION AND REPORTS BACK ON ANSWERED REQUESTS**Diane Becker raised concerns about Nevada State Senate Bill 420, explaining that it would impose a new fee—not a tax—on revenues from Tahoe-area small businesses and residents to fund transportation projects. She noted that the bill lacks clear details about how the funds will be used and warned that the cost burden would likely fall on locals to support infrastructure primarily intended for tourists. She encouraged residents to review the bill closely. In response, Denise Davis said that SB 420 was discussed in depth at the last Incline Village/Crystal Bay Community Forum meeting and offered to share a recap or video link with anyone interested. She invited residents to email ivcb.communityforum@gmail.com for more information and mentioned the next forum meeting would be held Friday at 9 a.m., both in person at the library and online. She also noted that the meeting link would be posted on Nextdoor on Wednesday and invited anyone interested in joining the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to reach out.
2. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**Kathie Julian briefly listed the agenda items for the upcoming Board of Adjustment meeting regarding IVCB, including the community pancake breakfast, Gamblers Run music festival, the League to Save Lake Tahoe fashion show, a variance for a fence extension, and a deck addition on a house in Incline Village. She encouraged attendees to share the links to the Tahoe Area Plan questionnaire (noting there are both quick and extended versions) and to post the link to the CAB review meeting happening the next night. She also urged anyone with opinions on Senate Bill 420 to register on the Nevada Legislature’s NELIS system to share feedback. She clarified that while SB 420 is framed as a transportation fee, the funds may be used for other purposes at the discretion of the business district members, with some limitations.

Pamela Mahoney Tsigdinos emphasized concerns others had raised about Senate Bill 420, stating that it would enable a small group of individuals to make decisions affecting the future of Incline Village and Crystal Bay. She encouraged everyone to read a detailed article she wrote, published in *Nevada Current* and titled *"Private Governments Coming to an Area Near You,"* which discusses similar issues in other communities across the U.S. The article is freely available online with no subscription or paywall.

**ADJOURNMENT-** The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

1. Assistant County Manager, Washoe County [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. NFPA stands for National Fire Protection Association. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Washoe County Community Outreach Coordinator [↑](#footnote-ref-4)