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**Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board Minutes of the regular meeting of the Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board held on January 4, 2025, at 10:00 A.M. at Hobey’s Casino, 5195 Sun Valley Boulevard, Sun Valley, NV 89433.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**
Present – Michael Rider, Heidi Soper, Amy Owens, Veronica Cortes
Absent – Mary Esposito
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**The pledge of allegiance was recited
3. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**Jesus Lopez introduced himself and his line of work as an insurance broker. He appreciated the warm and receptive welcome from the community he has been a part of for 2 years.Carmen Ortiz provided an update on her attendance at the December 19th CAB Reimagination" meeting, where she and Carol were part of a discussion with experienced community members. One key takeaway was a reflection on how, in the past, notes from the CABs were given to county commissioners and the planning department before votes were cast, but this process no longer exists. The meeting involved smaller group discussions on issues such as engagement processes, community involvement in developments, and the importance of reviewing developments at every stage. Carmen also highlighted her efforts to reach seniors in Sun Valley without computer access, especially through the Senior Spectrum publication. She encouraged the group to read the notes from the meeting, as the session was well-attended and productive.

Mark Neumann began by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. He expressed his strong advocacy for seniors in the community, highlighting that he received many calls from them, particularly related to materials sent to senior centers by county commissioners. Neumann emphasized his active involvement with seniors, mentioning his position on the Seniors Citizens Advisory Board for Washington County and thanked the commissioners for his appointment.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF** December 7, 2024

Heidi Soper motioned to approve the minutes of December 7, 2024 with amendments and Amy Owens seconded the motion. The minutes with amendments were approved unanimously.
5. **PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES**Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
Battalion Chief Sam Hicks provided a public safety update for Sun Valley. In December, there were 271 total calls, including 3 fire calls, 206 EMS calls, 13 motor vehicle accidents, 5 hazmat incidents, and 18 public assists. For the entire year, Sun Valley recorded 2,941 calls, with 80 fire calls, 2,083 EMS calls, and 165 motor vehicle accidents. Hicks also mentioned that the local burn season closed in December and would reopen in April, though it doesn’t significantly affect Sun Valley due to its small lot sizes. He announced the retirement of Chief Moore on January 25th and noted the upcoming arrival of 5 new recruits from the Academy in late February, who will begin active duty in March.

Ted Barrett asked how the statistics compare from the previous and Hicks informed him that they are up about 10% and that they see an increase of 10% a year.

Mark Neumann gave appreciation to Commissioner Garcia, the fire chief, and the community for their help with a community clean up that resulted in the removal of over 170 tires.

Washoe County Sheriff’s Department
Lieutenant Michael Bryan provided a public safety update, wishing everyone happy holidays and announcing the start of a new academy with 12 recruits. They will undergo 22 weeks of training, followed by 3-4 months of additional training and 6 months of field officer development. Bryan shared crime statistics for November, noting that key offenses were lower than the 3-year average: commercial burglaries remained the same at 1, grand theft auto decreased to 1 (down from an average of 4), residential burglaries dropped to 0 (from an average of 4), robberies were also 0 (average 1), and vehicle burglaries were 0 (average 3). He credited the decrease in crime to a combination of law enforcement presence and community vigilance, including residents using cameras and reporting suspicious activity. Bryan thanked the community for their role in reducing these numbers.Mark Neumann asked Lieutenant Bryan if he believed that security cameras, like Ring doorbells, were helping to deter crime. Bryan affirmed that they are effective, noting that visible cameras and outdoor lighting act as deterrents, as criminals prefer to operate in darkness. He also mentioned that seeing a Ring camera on a property brings relief to law enforcement, knowing that there might be footage to aid investigations. Neumann also asked about the installation of cameras at a local park to prevent vandalism. Bryan confirmed that cameras and new lighting had been installed, and vandalism calls had decreased. He also emphasized that regular police patrols and cooperation between the community and law enforcement were key in deterring crime.

Sherall Dyer asked Lieutenant Bryan about what could be done regarding people shooting off shotguns and guns in her neighborhood at night, as she has reported the issue but doesn't know who is responsible. Lieutenant Bryan explained that if the shots are reported, officers will patrol the area in hopes of hearing it themselves to pinpoint the location. He acknowledged that it can be difficult to track down the exact source, as multiple houses may be nearby, and shooting in a congested area is typically a misdemeanor unless it involves more serious actions. Bryan encouraged Dyer to continue reporting the incidents, as hearing or seeing the activity would help officers investigate further.

Heidi Soper raised a concern about her neighbors shooting over her house, which has already led to broken windows. She asked what she could do about it. Lieutenant Bryan advised her to call for service and provide detailed information to dispatch, such as descriptions of the individuals and the location from which they are shooting. He assured her that law enforcement would respond and investigate the situation. While shooting in a congested area is a misdemeanor, Bryan noted that other factors, such as the time of day and the direction of the shots, could lead to additional charges.

A resident described ongoing issues with neighbors who have shot guns and BB guns, with one incident causing damage to their window. Despite previous visits by deputies, the problem persists, and the resident is concerned about the potential escalation, particularly as the children involved might be putting themselves or others at risk. Lieutenant Bryan emphasized the importance of continuing to report these incidents, even if the deputies have already been called out multiple times. He mentioned a program called "stratified police model," which tracks repeated addresses to identify hotspots and directs additional resources to resolve persistent issues. He also suggested that the resident provide the address to Candy Ramos, who could gather more data on the calls related to that address, helping to address the ongoing problem.

A resident asked if a report is required to qualify for a 30-day "house watch" service, specifically inquiring about having police conduct a drive-by after incidents like gas thefts. Lieutenant Bryan clarified that a report is not necessary to request this service, and provided information on how to submit a request online.

A resident expressed concerns about dangerous driving on Sun Valley Boulevard, particularly with speeding and reckless drivers. They asked what the Sheriff's Department planned to do about it. Lieutenant Bryan responded, explaining that speed enforcement on Sun Valley Boulevard was the responsibility of the Nevada Highway Patrol (NHP) or Nevada State Police (NSP) because it was outside the Sheriff's jurisdiction. However, he mentioned that the Sheriff's Department occasionally patrolled the area. He advised the resident to contact NHP or NSP directly for speeding complaints and explained how a complaint could trigger enforcement through the Sheriff's motor division. He also highlighted that speeding and unsafe driving contributed to accidents in the area.

Michael Rider clarified that even though the Sheriff's Department may not have jurisdiction on Sun Valley Boulevard, they will still stop and ticket speeders if they are present. He acknowledged that they patrol the area more frequently, especially after these community meetings. Rider emphasized that the Sheriff's Department listens to residents' concerns and does what they can, even if it's not within their jurisdiction. He also expressed frustration with reckless driving, particularly among young people, noting that it's a challenge to control but they are doing their best to help.

Lieutenant Bryan explained that the Sheriff's Department focuses on "stratified policing," targeting areas with high crime rates. He mentioned that Sun Valley Boulevard between 1st and Gepford has become a hotspot for DUI arrests over the past five years. While DUI enforcement is one of their priorities, and they have seen more DUIs in that area, he acknowledged that Sun Valley Boulevard falls outside their jurisdiction. However, they still patrol the area. Bryan encouraged residents to direct speed enforcement complaints to NHP and NSP, especially since traffic has increased with the closure of 395, which has led more drivers to use Sun Valley Boulevard during peak hours.

Mark Neumann shared his perspective on the changes in law enforcement presence in Sun Valley. He recalled that Sun Valley Boulevard used to be heavily patrolled by multiple agencies, including Reno, Sparks, Washoe County, and NHP, but now the area is less frequently patrolled. He acknowledged that law enforcement is understaffed and underfunded, similar to other agencies, and noted that people don't want higher taxes but don't realize that without them, services like law enforcement can't be properly funded. Lieutenant Bryan expressed frustration that law enforcement used to have a strong, paramilitary structure, but now agencies are struggling to attract recruits, despite efforts like job fairs.

Veronica Cortes shared her personal experience of receiving two tickets on Sun Valley Boulevard for speeding and having the wrong insurance. She explained that the court date on her ticket was set for Veterans Day, when the court was closed, and she felt that the system lacked clarity and follow-through. She expressed frustration that the law enforcement system, including the court process, was not functioning properly, leaving citizens unsure of how to comply. Lieutenant Bryan responded, explaining that typically, there are three options on the back of a ticket: paying the fine, paying a reduced amount without the insurance charge, or paying a lesser fine with the insurance hit. He acknowledged the issue with the court date and noted that, in cases of incorrect insurance, showing proof of valid insurance could often result in the charge being dismissed, though it may still require paying a small filing fee. Veronica also raised a concern about an illegal dumping report filed by her neighbor in October that had not received any follow-up. Bryan explained that online reports are processed by the front desk, but these are not prioritized over more urgent cases. He clarified that if the report involved illegal activity, like burglary, it would require a detailed investigation to confirm the crime, which could slow the process. He offered to look into the specific case, asking Veronica to contact him via email for more direct communication.

Michael Rider thanked law enforcement for coming to the CABs and stated that the success of law enforcement has in reducing crime in the area was because of the CAB’s relationship directly with law enforcement and their shared love of the community.

1. **NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB**Candee Ramos explained the neighborhood development hub, a resource provided by Washoe County to keep residents informed about upcoming development projects in their community. The hub can be accessed on the Washoe County website, where residents can search for neighborhood meetings and view project details. Upcoming meetings are listed, including one for a project near Reno Stead airport on February 4. Ramos highlighted a past project, the Chocolate Drive multifamily development, which included a meeting on October 15. Residents who attended were able to submit feedback, and the comments were shared with the developer. She emphasized the importance of participating early in the development process to ensure community input is considered, which can result in changes to the project, such as improvements to storm drainage or the addition of a trailhead. She encouraged residents to proactively visit the hub, sign up for email notifications, or follow updates on Nextdoor to stay informed about projects that could impact their area. Ramos stressed the value of community engagement in shaping local development and invited people to share these opportunities with their neighbors.

Mark Neumann raised concerns about development projects, including the Chocolate Drive project, and emphasized that the community had required certain conditions, such as improving additional roads. He also questioned why smaller projects, like accessory dwelling units (ADUs), weren’t listed on the neighborhood development hub, despite receiving notifications for them. Candee Ramos responded that such smaller projects might not appear on the hub because they don't meet the criteria for larger developments but also maintained that she is not an expert on what triggers a post to the neighborhood development hub. Neumann added that while he receives notices for smaller projects, these don’t always appear on the hub. He and Mark both expressed frustration with not being informed about some developments, like ADU’s in their area, and wondered what qualifies as a "big" project for the hub. Ramos suggested a clarification at the next meeting on what triggers posting on the hub and mentioned that small developments might not be posted due to their lower impact on the community. She also noted that some concerns could be addressed with the county’s planning commission or county managers for further explanation.

A resident asked why the Chocolate Drive project has been delayed. Candee Ramos responded that she could not provide an answer during the meeting, as she only shares information from the neighborhood development hub. She suggested that other attendees in the room could provide more details about the project after the meeting, as it is a separate issue outside of the hub’s scope.

A resident asked about a meeting regarding the CAB (Citizens Advisory Board) and the county commissioners at the end of the month. Candee Ramos clarified that the meeting had already taken place on December 19th. The information from that meeting was being shared with the county commissioners, but no additional **meeting has been scheduled.**

1. **BOARD MEMBER/ COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS/DISCUSSION**Commissioner Mariluz Garcia reflected on her two years as a county commissioner, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to serve. She shared her involvement in regional boards and a statewide education commission. Garcia highlighted her focus on health, wellness, and parks during her first year, with efforts like youth outreach and bike safety initiatives. For the upcoming year, she plans to focus on community cleanups and addressing issues raised at CAB meetings. She also announced an upcoming strategic planning meeting on January 28th, covering topics like senior initiatives, behavioral health, housing, and homelessness. Garcia emphasized the importance of community engagement and staying connected with constituents through various channels, including social media.

Commissioner Jeanne Herman expressed her strong support for CAB meetings, emphasizing their importance in hearing from the community, especially those who cannot attend due to work or other commitments. She noted that CABs are crucial for understanding the concerns and needs of constituents and have been a key focus of her work since their inception. Herman stressed the need for CAB meetings to remain business-focused, highlighting their role in educating the public on how government works. She encouraged more participation and reaffirmed her commitment to maintaining these meetings as a vital platform for community engagement.

Heidi Soper made several announcements during the meeting. She encouraged attendees to suggest topics for future CAB meetings, as long as they pertain to Sun Valley. She expressed disappointment over the low attendance and asked members to spread the word about upcoming meetings. For the February 1st meeting, there may be speakers from Washoe County's emergency management team and Manager Brown. In March, the topic may focus on fire hydrants, with potential speakers from the fire department. Soper also mentioned she missed the December CAB meeting due to illness and shared her strong belief in the importance of CABs, which are funded by tax dollars. She highlighted that some commissioners are supportive of the CABs, while others are not. She encouraged everyone to attend the meeting on January 28th at 9:30 AM in the Commission Chambers to show support for the CABs, especially given uncertainty about their future.

Amy Owens made a potential future CAB request to have the Washoe County School District Superintendent to come and talk about overcrowding.

Veronica Cortes introduced herself as a proud third-generation Sun Valley resident and the owner of Biright Pizza, where she works daily from 9 AM to 9 PM. In addition to running her business, she is a local notary and operates a nonprofit where she teaches ranching and farming to youth. She emphasized her deep connection to Sun Valley, mentioning that her grandparents and parents were part of the community, and now she wants to give back. Veronica expressed her belief in the importance of the CAB and the need for youth awareness of local issues. She spoke about her commitment to addressing problems such as illegal dumping, providing more resources for mental health and behavioral health services, and supporting the homeless. She stressed the importance of community unity across all age groups and highlighted the need for collaboration in improving Sun Valley for everyone. Veronica also expressed her ongoing learning process, noting that she is still gaining knowledge but is dedicated to making a positive impact.

Mark Neumann expressed concern about the loss of influence and voting power that Citizens Advisory Boards (CABs) once held. He mentioned that in the past, CAB members had a significant say in community matters, with the ability to vote on issues and bring them to commissioners. However, over time, this has diminished, and now decisions are mainly made through the "Hub" system, which is often inaccessible to residents unless the issue is in their immediate vicinity or a major project. Neumann noted that the room used to be filled with people who wanted to engage with community matters, but now, with less participation and no voting power, the CAB's role seems to have diminished. He expressed concern that there is an effort to eliminate CAB meetings altogether.

Carmen Ortiz emphasized the importance of Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) meetings, highlighting their role in the community and expressing gratitude to Commissioner Herman and County Manager for attending a meeting just before Christmas. She noted that while she works for the school district and can't attend the County Commission meeting, the CAB meetings are crucial for the community's involvement. Ortiz also mentioned that updates from developers, like those working on Five Ridges and Island Village, would be valuable. She pointed out that residents are generally supportive of developers unless they misrepresent plans, as happened when an East Coast developer quoted the wrong master plan. Finally, Ortiz advocated for helping seniors, especially those on fixed incomes, by making recreational activities like pickleball more affordable, ensuring they don't have to choose between essentials and quality of life activities.

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Michael Rider emphasized the importance of the Citizens Advisory Boards (CABs) and their role in ensuring community involvement in decision-making, particularly regarding development projects. He mentioned that the CAB's influence had been significant in past projects, such as Highland Village, where public input helped shape decisions like avoiding apartment complexes in favor of matching local housing. Rider argued that CABs offer a direct and personal way for the public to engage with developers and county officials, which is essential for maintaining balance between development and the quality of life for existing residents. He expressed concerns about the move towards more impersonal, online-based engagement, like the development hub, as it may alienate people who are not comfortable with technology. He stressed that CABs provide a platform for real, impactful participation and suggested that these boards should have more voting power on issues affecting the community. Rider concluded by advocating for stronger community involvement and ensuring that the public's voice remains central in local decision-making.

The speaker announced a meeting on February 6th at 6:00 PM in the Commissioners' Chambers regarding a developer's proposal to change the grading of an apartment complex, which could affect water runoff in the area. The speaker expressed concern about potential flooding, as they live nearby, and encouraged others to attend if interested.

Mark Neumann and Heidi Soper criticized the Chocolate Drive Apartments development for their refusal to engage with the local community, stating that the developers are only focused on doing things their way, without considering community input. Soper shared a personal experience, alleging that after voicing her opposition to the development, the gas to her house was turned off, which she linked to the developer's actions. Both expressed frustration with the developers, describing them as dismissive of community concerns due to their wealth and legal resources.

1. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**Jude Jensen expressed concern over the lack of community involvement in the development process, particularly regarding the Chocolate Drive Apartments. She emphasized the importance of developers engaging with local residents and working collaboratively, rather than imposing decisions without community input. Jensen supported the idea of maintaining active and inclusive community meetings where concerns could be heard and addressed, ensuring a balance between development and the needs of current residents.

Commissioner Herman announced that she left a box of herbs in the back for people to take, should they want.

1. **ADJOURNMENT**The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 am