



## Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board

Approval of these draft minutes, or any changes to the draft minutes, will be reflected in writing in the next meeting minutes and/or in the minutes of any future meeting where changes to these minutes are approved by the CAB.

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board held February 2, 2022, 6:00 p.m. at the Spanish Springs Library at (7100A Pyramid Lake Highway).

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM** - Greg Coppola (present); Stan Smith (resigned); Sam Metz (present); Bruce Parks (present); Bruce Durgin (alternate, present online) and Sharon Thygesen had an excused absence, Matt Lee (absent).

**2. COLOR GUARD PRESENTATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Msg. Kurt Baumgarten and the Spanish Springs High School JROTC

**3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT AND DISCUSSION THEREOF** –  
*The recording began at the end of this item.*

**4. APPROVAL OF THE [MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF JANUARY 05, 2022](#) (for possible action)** – Bruce Parks moved to approve the minutes of January 5, 2022. Sam Metz seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**5. WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE UPDATE** – A general community update may be available (non-action item) Sgt. Armando Avina provided an update, including the results of the fundraiser. He spoke about recent issues with catalytic converter theft. Commissioner Hartung requested an agenda item regarding the catalytic converter. Bruce Parks asked if there is a correlation between crimes and homelessness. Sgt. Avina said we hadn't seen that correlation with this specific crime. He said it's a group of people finding opportunities for theft in dark areas. He advised citizens to install motion sensor flood lights; park your vehicles behind a fence or gate. This is an organized effort. It's a national problem. He said we are not responsible for the punishment as the justice court is responsible for the punishment. A public member asked if a cage around the catalytic converter would help. Sgt. Avina said it could help, but they could cut it off. Commissioner Hartung asked where the catalytic converters were being sold. He said we are looking for cooperation from these scrap yards. Commissioner Hartung said it has platinum metal in them.

**6. OVERVIEW OF UPCOMING WASHOE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** – Candee Ramos, Community Outreach Coordinator, Washoe County Manager's Office (non-action item)

Ms. Ramos provided an overview of the leadership program.

**7. ADVANCE WARNING SYSTEM** – Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) Project Manager, Sam Ahiamadi, P.E., will share information about the Advance Signal Warning System on Pyramid Highway as part of the Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan (non-action item)

Jae Pullen, NDOT Assistant Chief of Traffic Operations, introduced the item.

Sam Ahiamadi, NDOT Project Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation.

Questions from the CAB and Public included:

Sam Metz requested the latest data available from the 2019 survey results. He said if these proposed changes are based on the two-year-old study with growth and traffic flow. Mr. Pullen stated he provided the report and methodology of the study. He said he had responded to his questions about the crash data sections and criteria for replacing the advanced system and criteria for removing the advanced systems. Mr. Pullen said he provided a link for crash data which takes time to gather and compile. He said it might take six months or more to gather crash data from 2021. Mr. Metz said your decision is based on a 2019 survey which is several years old. Mr. Pullen said in 2019; we weren't identifying which

locations to remove or edit; what we were doing was creating a document as an update to the guidelines of our process of placing them and removing them. In 2019, they weren't identifying these signals were being removed. We were beginning the coordination to learn about those systems. We were looking at current policies and what other agencies were doing. He said a stop sign looks the same in Mexico, United States, and Canada. We began the process in 2019 and kick-started our process in 2020. The survey is our guidelines. The guidelines state that we need to have individual engineering studies on each location and coordinate with local government partners. We don't maintain or operate them. We coordinate with the local agency. He said we have a study published in 2020, then independent engineering studies are conducted at each key location. He said this is the last area that we are working on. He said as far as crash data, when NHP fills out a report, we look at severity with property damage, casualty, and fatalities. He said it's complicated with the type of crash. There are many different types of crashes. A professional engineer studies crashes and how they are related. He said the advanced warning systems placement has a benefit. We have updated the procedures. He said the engineer studies now collect data after several years. He said it's hard to interpret the crash data if you don't have the correct skills.

Sam Metz asked about yellow timing. Mr. Pullen said we have an interval time. It consists of yellow time and break time when all is red. He said red timing is 1 second. The yellow is 4-5 seconds. It's based on the physics of the speed of the car. It's a IES standard. Mr. Metz asked about the driver's dilemma zone. Mr. Pullen is based on many factors. It's a distance away from the signal. He said it's the point where you wonder if you will make the light or should break.

Mr. Metz read National Motorist Association Study. Mr. Pullen said in our study, we consider 45 mph or greater as high speed. He said more variables goes into problem intersections. Mr. Metz read from the Federal Highway Administration study regarding AWS and driver behavior. Mr. Metz read from the Nebraska Transportation Center study and the use of AWS in problem intersections.

Commissioner Hartung thanked the presenters. He said he wanted to explain the frustration of the citizens in Nevada. He said NDOT hadn't made capacity improvements in over 30 years. RTC made improvements at Calle De La Plata; however, there were geometry issues. We have added ingress and egress but no capacity improvements. He said it's been a huge frustration for citizens out here. He said numerous things have happened in a vacuum. NDOT made it more dangerous. This facility is right-in, right-out. He said it makes no sense to have to go down and make a U-turn at Dolores. Commissioner Hartung spoke about high speeds and acceleration lanes. He spoke about the decommissioning of the advance warning system. He said there are intersections added, but money is put into improving the highway. He read correspondence from NDOT – it's a done deal with no community input. He said he had asked for the crash data that AWS has caused. What are the fatalities? He spoke about frustration with the intersection at Calle De La Plata. Mr. Pullen said crash data is not housed in our jurisdiction. He said RTC is responsible for determining the priorities. He said data to remove AWS is based on the study. He said we have an engineering study to justify removal. We cannot just remove it; we have to phase it. We are responsible for engineering judgment to justify references. He said we are doing the public outreach in advance of the changes.

Mr. Parks said we know this is a done deal. Highway safety should be based on scientific facts. It would be nice to allow us to provide our input before making the decision. The cost of what you do comes out of our pockets. The majority of the money is spent in Southern Nevada, but not here. Mr. Parks said please take comments back to your management.

Candee Ramos read questions from Zoom:

Chris Donderro asked about the number of big rigs and truck traffic compared to other highways. Mr. Pullen said it's at max, it's 4%. Mr. Pullen said there are a lot of vehicles that are not big rigs which drives the truck percentage down.

Larry Skinner asked about the number of people who pull livestock trailers. Mr. Ahimadi spoke about classifying vehicles; we classify them based on the length, weight, and number of axels.

Maria Rodriguez spoke about additional stopping distance. She said it's 55 mph with a lot of truck traffic even though it's claimed to be only 4%. There is a lot of construction and development. She asked if speed would be lowered. There are long distances, sloped areas, and winter conditions. She said she doesn't know when the signal is going to change without the advance warning system. Mr. Pullen said there was a consideration with 45 mph or greater areas. He said the signal is the main traffic control device that needs to be the focus. Before we had AWS, we had traffic signals following the federal guidelines. There is a slew of criteria. He spoke about the clearance time after all yellow light before the red. The signal

itself should be designed to accommodate your concerns. Advance signals focus if you cannot see the signal because of curves or steep grades. If we knew perception reaction time, it takes a second to react. We are not designed to go 70 mph. We need more perception time. We can perceive as fast as we can run. Pyramid highway is a clear line of sight. The AWS that are staying are based on the sight distance. All things that were mentioned are taken into consideration. He said a signal flashing warning you need to pay attention you are entering an urbanized area. He said there were too many lights in the row. He said he knows you don't want to change. He said the items Maria mentioned were looking it. It's criteria to look at all these elements. Maria asked what it would take to stop on this project. Mr. Pullen said the reason why they are being removed is based on an engineer study. Mr. Pullen said it's moving forward to be awarded. He said we are moving forward to this. Mr. Pullen said the reason why we have this outreach; it's an engineer study to support the removal and the guidelines. Part of the guidelines is to let the public know.

A public member asked if this was taken before the State Transportation Board? Mr. Pullen said he could not answer that. He said this project had gone out to the bid, but it hasn't been awarded yet. The lowest bidder was \$336,000. In terms of the transportation board, there is a threshold for action items for \$5 million dollars or more. The public member asked where we could appeal this project through that Board or State Board of Adjustment. He said it sounds like we have to hire our own engineering firm to prove your engineering reports are wrong. He said this was a big issue for a lot of people, and we didn't have a chance to understand it until it was too late. Mr. Pullen said it went out to bid but hasn't been awarded yet until their bid has been verified. He said the transportation board meets once a month. It's available online. There is a public comment available for 3 minutes. He encouraged anyone who wanted to make a public comment can do so. The public comment asked if they had their bidders conference yet. Mr. Pullen said not that he was aware of.

The Chair asked everyone to raise their hand if they oppose the project.

Ken Theiss said the engineering judgement stinks. He asked what the stopping distance for a Toyota Prius is going 65 miles per hour. Mr. Theiss you don't know what it is and you don't know what the distance that is required to stop an 80,000 lbs. truck going 65 mph. He has no time to stop. Go look at the skid marks on Calle De La Plata. There is no warning.

Janet said the government says one size fits all. It doesn't. There is a lot under consideration. The doctor doesn't treat all patients the same. NDOT doesn't want to be sued for putting them in, but they can be sued for taking them out.

Steve said there is so much to cover, but it's a done deal. He said they had done studies. There have other studies that Sam read that have contradicted your studies. You can do a study to say whatever you want. Common sense says the advance warning is a good thing. Every entity in the world is looking for a warning. You said that people speed up when the lights flash, but haven't you ever seen people speed through when the light goes from green to yellow. Make the system work for us instead of us working for the system. The Nebraska system is a good study. He asked them to bring back their bosses. He said we didn't find out until the process was over. It's a done deal. He said this highway hadn't seen any improvements in a long time. Look at the growth out here. Garbage in, garbage out.

Public member said he appreciates the comments. He said there are a lot of time when engineer studies don't go so well such as space shuttle and recent bridge failure. He said we just learned about this. It's being shoved down our throat. There needs to be a point that the community can come in and make some noise. He said he doesn't understand how this study was initiated. How did this begin? It's a solution looking for a problem. Thank you for coming out.

Sharon said you want us to focus on the signal lights. The warning lights give us a heads up to focus on the signal lights.

Joanne said she appreciated everyone. She said her coworkers said it's a done deal. She saw this project via Facebook and made a public records request regarding the traffic with and without the lights. She said all she received was a description of the different types of lights. She didn't get the answers. She said it scares me that we will be on the road without the lights. What will happen with the equipment go that will be taken down. She said she expects to see you in 3, 6, a year from now to say this was a mistake.

Harry Faulk said it doesn't make sense. He said the study is based on speeding through the light. He said he likes slowing down and saving his breaks. (inaudible).

Karl Rodriguez said he moved out here in 2004 from California and raised his kids. He asked when the study was completed. It was 2019. He asked if the study was based on growth. Truck, speed, and volume have increased on this highway. There is a new development, construction, and trucks to support that. We have had motorcycle accidents. We have bars and dispensaries out here. It all adds up to fatalities.

Dana Caldwell spoke about positive driver response. It should be studied differently than a truck and trailer. Some trucks use the highway every day. Different areas have different circumstances. The AWS is used at high-speed intersections, isn't 45 mph fast enough? She said she agrees with zero fatalities. She said removing these lights will not assist in that goal.

The Chair invited everyone to the CAB email with their comments.

Public comments provided via email are attached hereto.

**8. CAB LETTER REGARDING NDOT** – Sam Metz, Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board Member (for possible action)  
Sam Metz made the following motion, and Bruce Parks seconded the motion, which passed unanimously:

The following motion was unanimously approved at February 02, 2022 CAB meeting: To send a CAB letter regarding opposition to removing the Advanced Signal Warning System along Pyramid Highway in Sparks. The letter will be sent to the following individuals: Governor Steve Sisolak Director of Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT, Kristina Swallow), Washoe County Manager, Eric Brown City of Sparks Manager, Neil Krutz City of Sparks Attorney, Chet Adams Washoe County District Attorney, Christopher Hicks Nevada State Senators, Ira Hansen & Heidi Gansert Nevada members of Congress, Mark Amodei, Natha Anderson, Jill Dickman Sparks City Councilman, Kristopher Dahir

**9. PYRAMID CROSS-STREET STOPLIGHT UPDATE** – Dwayne Smith, Division Director of Engineering & Capital Projects for Washoe County, will share an update about proposed stoplights along Pyramid Highway (non-action item)  
Dwayne Smith provided a presentation.

Commissioner Hartung asked the timeline of Sunset Springs/Egyptian, and Dolores. He said he understood lights can be an inconvenience, but it makes it easier to get onto the highway. Mr. Smith said these projects are not just Washoe County projects; we work with RTC and NDOT. He said the Sunset Springs is designed, but it's an NDOT project. It will be constructed this year. He will report back about the month it will be started. Mr. Smith said additional improvements are being made on the highway with acceleration, deceleration, center lane improvements. Those are necessary for the Dolores signal. Commissioner Hartung said he wants Mr. Smith to look at the geometry. He said Calle De La Plata needs improvements. Mr. Smith said we have two subdivisions and industrial in construction. We know we need to focus on those next step improvements at that intersection.

In response to public comment about the AWS, Mr. Smith advised the public member to share your concerns with your CAB and NDOT. Washoe County has been part of those reviews.

A public member spoke about the traffic calming on Silent Sparrow; the temporary traffic calming devices were effective, the ones that are in now don't work. Mr. Smith said the geometry was a little different and you had to slow down more. He said he appreciates that comment.

He said he would be happy to come back with engineering topics.

**10. FIRE PROTECTION FOR A GROWING COMMUNITY** – Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Fire Chief Charles Moore will address the growing population in Spanish Springs and how TMFPD and the City of Sparks work collaboratively to protect citizens (non-action item)

Chief Charlie Moore provided an update of safety improvements – High call volumes for EMS service and REMSA. He said 10-acres of land has been purchased for a new fire station. He spoke about the mutual aid agreement with the City of Sparks, and the new dispatch software.

A public member stated she went to the fire station for an ashcan, but the fire station didn't have any and sent them to a

Sparks station. The Sparks station said they don't have any because they aren't allowed to have a fire. Chief Moore said Commissioner Hartung spent \$5,000 of his discretionary funds for the ashcans. He said they are available at the Baring way Station but will have some set aside for the Spanish Springs station.

A public member asked what happens to the previous station when a new station is built. Chief Moore said it's gets abandoned, and the land may be sold. He said the new location at Campo Rico will also be good for mutual aid.

A public member thanked Chief Moore and his crew.

**11. ENVISION2040** – Eric Young, Senior Planner, Community Services Department, Washoe County, and consultant group Logan-Simpson will present information on the Envision2040 area plan (non-action item)

Eric Young introduced the item. Megan with the Logan-Simpson consultant provided a slideshow presentation.

A public member asked about getting public transportation such as buses. Megan said that is something that we will look at. We will include that in goals and policies for service areas outside of where they are now. A lot of this will come from everyone's feedback. The Chair said RTC is running buses out here now. They are scheduled rides.

**12. WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE-** Washoe County Commission Chair Vaughn Hartung may be available to provide updated information on discussions and actions by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). Commission Chair Hartung can be reached via email at [vhartung@washoecounty.gov](mailto:vhartung@washoecounty.gov).

Ms. Jennings asked about transit. Commissioner Hartung said he has been fighting to get flex transit; however, it doesn't serve deep enough. He said he will work to get the radius changed to serve the citizens who lives out farther. He said we made progress but have more work to do. He said the Flex ride is an Uber concept.

Maria asked the forecast on traffic patterns with roundabouts on La Posta. Commissioner Hartung said that is in City of Sparks who do not share their plans with us. He said La Posta is inside the City of Sparks. The east side of the Pyramid Highway is their jurisdiction. The west side is Washoe County planning jurisdiction. He said he doesn't know what City of Sparks has planned there. Commissioner Hartung explained the design and access.

Mike said since La Posta is City of Sparks' jurisdiction, then they respond to service calls. Commissioner Hartung explained the sheriff may also respond to calls.

Commissioner Hartung said City of Sparks wants to turn La Posta into a cross connection with the tri-center. They want it to come out at US Parkway. We don't have what is required for the right-of-way.

Dee said Washoe County controls half of Pyramid that goes west, and Sparks goes east. Commissioner said let's separate out planning versus right-of-way. NDOT controls right-of-way. They control the access. He said NDOT raised the speed limit. He said there has been no capacity improvements.

Commissioner Hartung spoke about the history of the area and the original plans for a multiuse path.

**13. CHAIR/BOARD MEMBER ITEMS-** None

**14. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT AND DISCUSSION THEREOF** – None

**ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

CAB Program [CAB@WashoeCounty.gov](mailto:CAB@WashoeCounty.gov)