

**RESOLUTION
TO SUSPEND GOLDEN VALLEY ARTIFICIAL RECHARGE PROGRAM
FEES FROM JANUARY 1, 2024, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2033**

WHEREAS, in response to then declining groundwater levels in the Golden Valley area and an increase in the number of domestic wells requiring deepening, and at the request of the Golden Valley residents, on June 25, 2002, the Washoe County Board of Commissioners (Board) approved County Ordinance No. 1166, which established the Golden Valley Artificial Recharge Program (Program) in the Utilities Fund with a monthly fee of \$22.66 applicable to each property that lies within the Program boundary, to pay for those necessary services to support and manage the artificial injection of water into the aquifer; and

WHEREAS, under the current Ordinance 1548, as of September 30, 2023, the Program balance is approximately \$684,000 that has been collected for the benefit of the Program participants and which includes an emergency reserve requirement of \$100,000; and

WHEREAS, the Program activities, including artificial groundwater injection, has occurred on an annual basis beginning in 1992, pausing in 1998 until 2002 at which time varying amounts of potable (drinking) water were injected into the underlying aquifer through April 2016, averaging approximately 57 acre-feet per year, during which time multiple domestic wells continued to be deepened and/or repaired; and

WHEREAS, all artificial groundwater injection was stopped in April 2016 in response to unexpected and significantly increasing groundwater elevations within Golden Valley, and based on historic trends, it was anticipated that the groundwater levels would decline over time, and when groundwater levels continued to increase, a comprehensive hydrologic and geological investigation (Investigation) was initiated and a supporting groundwater model was created; and

WHEREAS, the Investigation determined highly varied geological subsurface conditions, increasing natural recharge, and reduced municipal groundwater pumping activities are resulting in persistent high groundwater levels in Golden Valley and as a result, no artificial injection of water will occur in the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS, in response to stopping artificial groundwater injection and anticipation of ceasing future artificial injection of water into the aquifer, a series of public meetings, mailings, and two surveys were initiated to inform Program participants of the developing situation and to receive their input and recommendations regarding the future of the Program; and

WHEREAS, over 47% of the Program participants responding to the surveys, and approximately two-thirds of respondents preferred not to terminate the Program in total, suspend the collection of monthly program participant fees, maintain the required permit with the State of Nevada Division of Water Resources, and analyze the Program at the end of a ten-year period. Approximately one-third of respondents voted to terminate the Program and receive a refund; and

WHEREAS, Washoe County will work with any Program participants who may have past due accounts in an effort to bring all accounts current and in alignment with the other Program participants, and during this time, not place any customer on the delinquent tax roll, until further direction is provided by the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Program fund has sufficient cash to offset any loss of revenue during the suspension of the collection of fees, until December 31, 2033, or subsequent Board direction is received; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Washoe County to suspend the Golden Valley Artificial Recharge Program (Program) participant fee collection from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2033, directing staff to continue Program activities in support of the maintenance of the State of Nevada Division of Water Resources injection permit performed pursuant to Washoe County Ordinance 1548, at an estimated annual cost of \$30,000.00 with all efforts utilizing existing Program cash reserve balance, estimated to be \$684,000.00 as of September 30, 2023, and to require all Program participants to bring any past due accounts current through the processes identified in Ordinance 1548.

This resolution is effective on passage and approval.

Adopted this 14th day of November 2023; by the following vote:

Ayes: Hill, Garcia, Andriola

Nays: Herman, Clark

Absent: None

Abstain: None

[Signature]

Chair,
Washoe County Commission

Attest: [Signature]

Washoe County Clerk

