

Draft MINUTES
Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission
July 24th, 2024

The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission met in a scheduled session on Monday, July 24th, 2024, in the Washoe County Commission Chambers, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada.

The meeting was televised live and replayed on Washoe Channel at: <https://www.washoecounty.us/mgrsoff/Communications/wctv-live.php> also on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/WashoeCountyTV>

Vice Chair Dake called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Kevin Joell, Sean Hill, Timothy Dake, Michaelangelo Aranda, Miles Gurtler, Lisa Rode, Mark Neumann, Neal Jones

Absent: Nicholas-Martin Kearney and BCC liaison Mariluz Garcia.

Staff Present: Brandon Roman, Herbert Kaplan, Colleen Wallace Barnum, Aaron Smith, Jennifer Roebuck, Nick Steuer, Andy Brown, Eric Crump, Mike Furlong, Sal Ruiz Aguilar, Bryan Harrower

Commissioner Hill joined the meeting at 1:34p

Chair Joell joined the meeting at 1:36p

Commissioner Rode joined the Zoom meeting at 2:12p.

Commissioner Hill left the meeting at 5:17p.

Commissioner Dake left the meeting at 4:30p

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Reading of Zoom Instructions

Brandon Roman read the Zoom instructions.

4. Public Comment

Vice Chair Dake stated public comments are welcome during the public comment period at the beginning of the meeting and during each individual action items and are limited to three minutes. During the general public comments at the beginning and end of the meeting, speakers may address any item either on or off of the agenda. For the remainder of the agenda, public comments will only be heard during items listed for possible action and should be about the specific item being considered by the Commission.

Public comment by Roger Edwards. Mr. Edwards stated he is a 50-year resident and has served on many Boards and Commissions. Mr. Edwards stated the stadium project should have thought about under the parameters of the original property owner's wants and wishes for the land, he stated the project should be revisited or outright denied as it does not conform to the original property owners understanding of when they donated the land. Mr. Edwards stated the Commission should take that into consideration and deny this project.

Chair Joell asked the public to refrain from any comments while speakers are speaking.

Public comment by Nicole Harris. Ms. Harris would like to share that communication is important and that strong communication from all parties – including the parties proposing the project, the Commission, and the neighborhood. Ms. Harris stated many different neighborhoods will be affected and it is important to broaden the scope of communications, so everyone has the opportunity to come in person or canvas the neighborhood to see if there is a true need for the project. Ms. Harris stated she believes the project was proposed in 2011 and over 10 years later is being presented to County Commissioners, the residents has no idea it would be coming to the neighborhood. Ms. Harris believes it is the duty of Washoe County and responsibility to citizens overrides the situation today. Ms. Harris wants to work with every element of the community because this project affects more than just their neighborhood.

Public comment by Doug Jalen. Mr. Jalen stated he is a resident of South Reno and is dead set against the stadium, he believes it would be a travesty to approve.

Public comment via Zoom by Lisa Katie. Ms. Katie stated she is not opposed to a soccer stadium but is opposed to how it was brought about and the location. Ms. Katie feels there was not enough communication for the area around the proposed location and neighborhood, due diligence was not done by FOFF and feels the Commission should take the neighborhood and community into account and not just the people who want a stadium. Ms. Katie stated a soccer stadium is a good thing, but not in that area. Wendy Damonte, FOFF, stated alcohol is already being served at park, but that is not true. Ms. Katie feels the park should remain open so that people that live there can use and feels that the infrastructure is not there for a stadium, as far as traffic. The season would run from March to September with possible post season, which is a long time to have all that congestion and for nonprofessional soccer clubs to use it. The intended use of the park was for the community.

Chair Joell stated there will be opportunities to comment on the Action Item #11 as well.

Public comment by Joyce Raque. Ms. Raque stated she moved to Reno 13 months ago and chose the condo and neighborhood she would live in based on the surrounding area. Ms. Raque stated she has invested a lot and is still investing and does not approve of taking away a small space for a large community with a soccer stadium.

Public comment by Brigita Coler. Ms. Coler stated she is a South Reno resident and is not against a soccer stadium and loves soccer but loves green space and lack of traffic more. Ms. Coler stated she has heard the stories of how the land was donated and would like that to be honored. Ms. Coler would also like to understand unsolicited bid behind the scenes that appears to be untoward and questionable by many people, and hopes Commission will reconsider this project and more transparency with unsolicited bids.

Public comment by Fred Firschein. Mr. Firschein stated that he lives in South Reno and is opposed to the stadium because he looks at the results of Reno Ice. There is no parking during games. Mr. Firschein would like to know what plans are being made to improve the infrastructure and who would be paying for that infrastructure.

Public comment by Louanne Meter. Ms. Meter stated she lives in South Reno,

Where she came from worked with county commissioners and infrastructure on general plan. Project was not in any kind of general plan proposals or considerations for South Valleys. Ms. Meter stated to not honor a man's wishes for what he felt was best for his community is unconscionable. The item was not publicly noticed well, as she only heard about it yesterday and was moved to speak. Ms. Meter said there is noise, traffic and lights to consider, there has already been a lot of development approved in that area and traffic is horrendous. Ms. Meter stated a private individual is trying to put a soccer stadium in a more appropriate area and the Commission should not move forward.

Public comment by Mike Clark, Washoe County Commissioner, District Two. Commissioner Clark thanked everyone for being there and encouraged everyone to come forward and share opinions on everything that comes to the County Boards as that is how Commissioners can have a good understanding of what the public is thinking.

Chair Joell moved Item 11 up to next item on the agenda.

5. Approval of the Draft Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of June 24, 2024.

Commissioner Hill stated there was a misspelling to his name.

Motion by Commissioner Aranda to approve the Draft Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of June 24, 2024, with the corrections. Second by Commissioner Jones.

No public comment. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Acknowledgement and recognition of Park Operations staff for their outstanding service and contributions to Washoe County

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, presented the certificate to Sal Ruiz Aguilar for 5 years of service.

7. Discussion of the Park Commissioner Manual, distributed to Park Commissioners on May 22, 2024

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, stated she and chair Joell met in early 2024 to discuss an onboarding document for Commissioners, and worked with Chair Joell and internally with staff to put together the manual. Information can be added at any time, the manual provides the Commission the ability to know what the confines are, how it's created, the meeting schedule, open meeting law, meeting protocol, code of conduct, and security procedures. Colleen wanted to give the Commissioners an opportunity to review it and go over any questions or comments.

Chair Joell stated Colleen and staff did a great job and thanked her.

Commissioner Hill stated he found section 7, the powers and duties commission was appreciated and particularly helpful during Item number 11 today.

Commissioner Jones stated it may be helpful to review Robert's Rules of Order.

Colleen stated there is also an electronic version that can be referred to.

In response to Commissioner Jones question about Open Meeting Law, Herbert Kaplan, stated he believes an Open Meeting Law training should be required for all new commissioners, and he has planted the seed to get that started. Mr. Kaplan also stated that Commissioner should know the Public Records Act, and that it applies to them and any communication they may have that is related to County business.

Commissioner Neumann stated he sits on other boards, and generally, about once per year, that goes over conduct in public meetings for all new board members and elected officials.

Colleen stated it could be agendized at a future meeting and did take notes to make sure that an acknowledgement form for the Open Meeting Law training is included as well as a request for County e-mail and the public records act.

No public comment.

8. Update and discussion on dog park and off-leash area safety, with cooperative efforts being made with Regional Animal Services.

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, stated there was an incident on Sunday, March 17 at Rancho San Rafael in the multi-use pasture.

Commissioner Martin Kearney had requested the incident be added to the agenda of a future meeting.

Colleen stated there was a dog fight that ended tragically, with a dog being shot and killed. Park staff, Regional Animal Services and Washoe County Sherriff's Office were the responding agencies.

The multi-use pasture is an area where off leash dogs are allowed, also an area where special events are held. The area is not fenced or managed as a dog park. The violation was included in the park's reports, but there were no citations issued. Regional Animal Services followed NRS 574.100

Park staff assisted with crowd control and helping Regional Animal Services with witness statements. The owner of the dog that passed away started a Go Fund Me raising close to \$5,000 and was meant to create fencing to separate the small dogs and large dogs. However, because of the way the field is managed and the use for special events, fencing would not be appropriate.

Colleen met with the Director of Regional Animal Services and discussed starting a public education program about dog park and off leash area safety. Kelley Bollen, a Pet Behaviorist, gave the first public presentation was on June 27th at Regional Animal Services and there will be an additional program on September 10th. Based on questions and answers and how the meeting goes, would like to come up with a video training to be placed on the Park's and Regional Animal Services websites as well as potentially on signs in the park.

In regard to Chair Joell's question about signage, Colleen stated there are signs that aggressive dogs are not allowed.

Commissioner Jones stated there should be signage in the park stating that Washoe County has leash laws and if the dog is unleashed, the dog must be under voice command.

In response to Commissioner Aranda's question about Ranger citation authority, Colleen stated that the civil penalty can only be issued if it's witnessed by the Rangers.

In response to Chair Joell's question about a small dog park on the draft Master Plan for Rancho San Rafael, Coleen stated that is conceptual and would not be in that area.

In response to Commissioner Rode's question on cameras, Colleen doesn't believe that cameras could be counted as a witness. Staff could look into the cost of cameras but there are so many locations but has been looked into cameras in certain areas for safety reasons.

Commissioner Neumann stated that cameras can be costly to run, and there are financial issues in the parks already so it would likely not be feasible.

9. Resolution to recognize July as Parks and Recreation Month.

Chair Joell read the resolution to recognize July as Parks and Recreation Month.

Motion by Commissioner Neumann to approve the resolution to recognize July as Parks and Recreation Month. Second by Commissioner Hill. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Park/Program of the Month: Junior Ranger Program – Andy Brown, District Park Manager

Andy Brown, District Manager, gave a presentation on the Junior Ranger Program.

Chair Joell thanked Andy & staff for a fantastic job. Chair Joell stated that there is no charge for the program and the books can be picked up at any Regional Parks and are listed on the website.

In response to Chair Joell's question about attendance, Andy stated they are well attended and recommends signing up early to attend but can also be placed on a waiting list.

Commissioner Aranda stated that he is looking forward to seeing more activities added to the program. Andy stated that there are activities in the parks that rangers have come up with on their own as well.

Commissioner Hill stated that he is a fan of getting kids involved in nature and outside. Commissioner Hill suggested that the State Parks Rec Trails Program may have funding and suggested working together, Andy stated that they are talking to all of their partners and did discuss that.

In response to Chair Joell's question about the maximum age, Andy stated there is no maximum age.

11. Discussion and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commission on whether staff should move forward with negotiating the unsolicited proposal received by Wendy W. Damonte, representing For Our Fans Foundation, a Nevada non-profit corporation for an outdoor soccer stadium at the County's South Valleys Regional Park, within APNs 142-011-13 and 142-011-02; negotiations would involve staff obtaining an appraisal for the fair market value of a 20-year ground lease contemplated by the proposal pursuant to NRS 244.2815. (Commission District 2)

Chair Joell stated Washoe County received an unsolicited proposal, meaning Washoe County had no interest in the project, and an outside party came to them. The first step in the proposal was to bring the item to the lowest body, Washoe County Open Space & Regional Parks Commission, to see if it is a fit at the park.

The proposal was received in the Park Commission May meeting, with zero public comment and not a lot of information. The Commissioners deferred the item to a future meeting to obtain more details and public comment. Commissioners did allow staff to continue to have discussions with applicants to get more details. A special meeting was called for June and another presentation was given. There was not a lot of additional information, and the result of that meeting is that the applicant was directed to conduct a public meeting with a notice to residents and park users for input. Chair Joell stated the proposal does not meet the intent of the original Master Plan in his opinion. Chair Joell stated the Open Space & Regional Parks Commission is an advisory board and will make a recommendation to Washoe County Commissioners to either deny or continue the project. The project has not gone through any planning processes yet.

Vice Chair Dake stated the outpouring of comments are appreciated, and letting the public's thoughts and concern be known is very important to the Commission. Commissioner Dake thanked those that are present and those that took the time to send in e-mails.

Chair Joell stated he did read through every e-mail that was received, 275 letters were opposed, two were in favor and one did not object but has concerns, so it is very clear what the neighborhood thinks of the project. Chair Joell stated the

comments were taken to heart and he appreciates seeing the value that people place in the parks.

Eric Crump, Director of Community Services, stated that appreciates everyone that is present, and this type of engagement is rare for the Park Commission. Today's recommendation is whether or not to move forward on the unsolicited proposal from Wendy Damonte, representing For Our Fans Foundation for a soccer stadium at South Valleys. The proposal has been presented in two prior meetings, and this item provides the Commission with an opportunity to take any action they feel necessary or receive more information and feedback. The Park Commission is an advisory board. The item was styled as an action item purposely to allow the Commission another opportunity to take any action. Park Commission's recommendations are extremely important to the Board of County Commissioners and any action taken and comments will be included in the packet given to County Commissioners. Washoe County staff is seeking direction from County Commissioners before spending additional time and resources on the proposal. Should the Board of County Commissioners support moving forward, the process would follow NRS 2442815 which first requires appraisal of fair market value, resolutions from Washoe County finding it's in the best interest and several other things in the planning process, which is where the public starts getting engaged. Washoe County has received considerable public feedback via e-mail. Mr. Crump, along with representatives from FOFF, Wendy Damonte and Bob Enzenberger will be available to answer any questions.

Chair Joell stated there was a lot of information during the May and June meetings that was rebuffed by public comment and would like clarification. Commissioners asked for letters of support from some youth leagues, which were not given, and comments were received from board members stating that they do not support this. In response, Wendy Damonte, FOFF, stated they are waiting for the next steps. Ms. Damonte thanked everyone for being present, and stated that FOFF is following the correct process, and public meetings like today's happen at the next step. FOFF has read through several of the comments, and the majority of concerns are about traffic, which they are also concerned about. Traffic concerns would be looked at in the next phase. Ms. Damonte stated they are trying to bring something new to Northern Nevada and stadium will create momentary traffic comparable to Washoe Little League, GBYSL Soccer, Reno Rodeo, Balloon Races, Wolfpack Basketball. Without opportunities, like Washoe Little League, GBYSL, High Sierra Lacross, other activities and now a soccer stadium, the town is only a place to live and work.

Ms. Damonte stated that South Valleys is not a developed park and hasn't been built out in hundreds of years, there is no money to build out the park and that area will remain sagebrush and unused until the community finds a way to build it out. Ms. Damonte stated she wants a thriving community that is respectfully done, where kids have places to recreate, and the community is not using that area of the park currently. Public/private partnerships are listed on the master plan as potential ways to build out the park. FOFF is building the stadium, a professional soccer team is going to come in will be ran with a company, money will go back to the nonprofit which will help with parks, kids who can't afford to participate in sports.

Chair Joell stated that Ms. Damonte had indicated in the last meeting that the Dorostkar Family was in support of the project, and out of respect for the family that donated, would like to hear from Mina Dorostkar who submitted an e-mail.

Ms. Dorostkar read her submitted public comment. Chair Joell thanked Ms. Dorostkar for her comments and her family's contribution to the community.

In response to Ms. Dorostkar's comments, Wendy Damonte thanked her for being there and stated they did have a conversation where she explained the facts which have been distorted since then. Ms. Dorostkar's letter stated a 10,000-seat indoor stadium, but what's being proposed is a 5500-seat stadium or less stadium and is not outdoor. Ms. Damonte stated they are following the process set up Washoe County, and that Ms. Dorostkar was agreeable during their first conversation.

Ms. Damonte stated she is going to work with the Community to make the stadium a great asset. Ms. Damonte stated that she planned to follow up with Ms. Dorostkar once the item went through Park Commission but this point in the process is to gather information to get to the Board of County Commissioners and know the direction they are going. Ms. Damonte stated people are reading articles and talking to other people and not talking to her about the project.

In response to Commissioner Aranda's question about a public meeting or neighborhood canvas, Mr. Crump stated that is has been Washoe County's experience that public meetings before there is direction from the Board of County Commission, gives the public a presumption that Washoe County has taken action and is supporting the project. Mr. Crump gave the recommendation to Wendy Damonte and FOFF to pause public engagement until it goes to the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Aranda stated the purpose of the preliminary meeting was to give a precursor to the community rather than leaving them feeling shafted from the conversation. Commissioner Aranda also stated all agenda items are posted ahead of time on the Park Commission website.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question on the original master plan, Mr. Crump stated that the most recent master plan for South Valleys identifies flat fields, a dog park, baseball fields and recreational opportunities you'd find in Washoe County Regional Parks.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question about the stadium with Sports Logic approved by City of Reno Planning, Mr. Crump stated he could not speak to that as it is through the city.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question on the proposal stating resources from both parties as well as soccer stadium failure, Mr. Crump presumed it was regarding shared infrastructure. Reno Ice is an example of how an unsolicited proposal can move forward through the process and through agreements that are associated with the development and the maintenance. Reno Ice, for example, has strategies in place so that the burden does not fall on taxpayers. Mr. Crump presumes that if the Board of County Commissioners gave direction in support, similar strategies would be incorporated in any resultant agreements.

In response to Commissioner Jones' question about deed restrictions, Mr. Crump stated there are deed restrictions and if the project were to move forward, Washoe County would work the DA's office and signees and successors to ensure it meets requirements, and the LWCF act does allow for conversion of property.

Chair Joell stated it was disappointing that public meeting was not held and understands there will be additional opportunities, but the Commissioners were not asking for Washoe County to host the meeting, but asking the applicant to go in the community and get input from the people that would be affected.

In response to Commissioner Hill's question about funding for the park, Mr. Crump stated the last estimate for full build out of the park is just south of \$2 million, \$2.8 million is identified for improvements. \$800,000 has been encumbered and \$2 million has been granted through AARPA funding for construction but will not cover any amenities.

In response to Chair Joell's question about who is paying for design and engineering, Mr. Crump stated the design that is currently under contract is design that is in the Master Plan, any elements the project would need if it moved forward, FOFF would participate in, and it would not be Washoe County's design. The feedback would be incorporated into the presentation to the Board of County Commissioners and the agreement if moved forward.

In response to Commissioner Aranda's question about the current development of the park and how long until it is developed, Mr. Crump stated Washoe County currently has \$2 million in AARPA funding for construction for a \$10 million project. The \$2 million will likely get grating, utilities, potentially some permitting. \$2 million will not go far for development and he is comfortable saying there will be no amenities based on the current available funding. Staff will continue to go after grant funding and look for opportunities through the general fund and other funding opportunities to develop the park. Mr. Crump could not say how long it will take and that there are currently a lot of regional parks that aren't built out and have been in that state for a long time.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question about the \$800,000 of taxpayer money, Mr. Crump stated that the \$800,000 is designing 20+ acres of the park and the stadium will not take up the whole park. As design currently sites, the stadium can still be accommodated with some changes.

Chair Joell stated Commissioners received a letter from Marc Radow of Sport Logic, who has a soccer stadium and team lined up for 395 and Parr area and asked him to speak. Mr. Radow stated he is president of Sport Logic Northern Nevada, direct benefactor of South Valleys Regional Park and the developer of the alternative and approved professional soccer stadium in Reno.

Mr. Radow stated is he well versed in South Valleys and his mission is to fill the void of pro soccer since the evacuation of Reno 1868. In exploring the possibility in May 2022, Mr. Radow met with Bob Lucey, former Board of County Commissioners Chair, and Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent and after meetings it was clear that it was not possible. Mr. Radow stated he searched elsewhere and found the perfect site, with zero objection and a lot of support from the community. Mr. Radow stated Washoe County made it clear that South Valleys was not an option, which is why he invested privately in land that would need be confronted with the same issues, noise, traffic, lights, in a residential neighborhood.

Mr. Radow has experience in pro soccer, youth soccer and soccer clubs. Mr. Radow believes this can be achieved through the private sector, and there is no need for public funding, government operations or public risk. Mr. Radow asked that the Commission please vote no on the stadium at South Valleys. Mr. Radow stated he would like to meet with Ms. Damonte and FOFF to discuss what is best for the overall community and would be happy to work with them.

Mr. Radow stated he listed to the May and June meetings and believes there was a lot of misinformation and is glad it's getting vetted now. Mr. Radow feels the commission was rushed. Mr. Radow gave a presentation on his proposed private stadium.

In response to Chair Joell's question about the denial of Mr. Radow's proposal in May 2022, and liability for Washoe County, Herb Kaplan, Deputy DA, stated that there would need to be research done to determine exactly what happened with the rejected project, but it could open the County up for liability.

Mr. Kaplan also reminded the Commissioners that today, this item is early on in the process set out by Washoe County and as agendized today, is the portion that this Commission has control over is to possibly as the Board of County Commissioners for direction on whether or not the project should continue and move forward in the process.

Mr. Radow stated he met with the officials of Washoe County, Bob Lucey and Colleen Wallace Barnum, independently and repetitively. South Valleys Park was a part of those conversations, but turned down and it became evident that if a stadium would work it would need to be a private effort, and a public/private partnership makes sense if private can't do it themselves. Mr. Radow stated that the private entrepreneurs can and want to do this and the government would be getting in the way.

Commissioner Jones thanked Mr. Radow for his detailed and pertinent letter.

Bob Enzenberger, For Our Fans Foundation, gave a statement. Mr. Enzenberger stated that in the initiation of the proposal, FOFF knew there would be concerns regarding noise, lighting and traffic. FOFF plans to address and take care of those concerns during the permitting and planning process, they understand and accept that those will be concerns. Eric Crump and Aaron Smith have both stated they would be looked into. Mr. Enzenberger stated that some of the other concerns

came from a mailer that was sent out to the neighborhood that contained incorrect innuendo and misinformation. FFFF knows what they've committed to, Washoe County staff knows what they've committed to, and Mr. Enzenberger believes the Commission knows what they've committed to as to how they can help the park if the proposal moves forward with City of Reno permitting and planning. Mr. Enzenberger hopes the Commissioners understand that some comments made were fostered by incorrect information.

Chair Joell stated that he agrees with Wendy and some of the other commenters about the community aspect of a stadium and something to do, but the question before the Commission is if it belongs in a park. Chair Joell stated there are multiple areas where potential revitalization could happen. Chair Joell researched the examples Ms. Damonte gave in an earlier meeting and stated one has not yet been built and one is an industrial area, which is quite different from a residential neighborhood and park.

In response to Chair Joell's questions about a list of other areas that were examined, Ms. Damonte stated she went to all the entities and looked at maps but could not find any.

In response to Chair Joell's question about private land, Ms. Damonte said she did not look through private land as she was talking to the City of Sparks who stated they needed a lands bill to build up. In talking with and reviewing maps with Washoe County, it was discovered that South Valleys Regional Park needed help and has been sagebrush for hundreds of years with no plan to build it out.

In response to Chair Joell's question about a potential partnership with Reno Rodeo, Ms. Damonte stated that her understanding is that Reno Rodeo is looking to do the Rodeo arena and create a legacy project and doesn't see how soccer would fit into the legacy project.

Chair Joell stated one of his biggest concerns is the amount of parking that is required would use a lot of the park area, realizes that parking is needed and is part of the current master plan but not at the level that would be needed for a 6,500-seat stadium.

In response to Chair Joell's question about the engineering sketch given to Commissioners and an additional driveway that went to the parcel directly north of the park, Ms. Damonte stated there were no plans for that property. They were trying to get creative to help get the traffic off of Wedge Parkway and on to

Virginia Street. Ms. Damonte stated she has the same concerns about traffic as he public and is trying to figure out solutions.

Chair Joell stated that he has seen minor projects that are really just real estate transactions that would double property value and then be sold. Chair Joell also stated that the Commission received public comment that he was able to verify through business license records, that Ben Damonte is a manager or works for the owners of that property that is the mobile home park. In response to Chair Joell's question about kicking out residents to redevelop the property to be more profitable, Mr. Enzenberger stated the idea was fostered by the architects as they knew there was already a dirt road at the north end of the park which happens to be on the other side of the FEMA flood plane that needs to be address if this portion of the park will be built out. Mr. Enzenberger stated the bridge had two purposes: one, to access the dirt road on the north end of the park, and two, to provide access to the park to Pioneer Hills residents.

Commissioner Aranda stated that from the Commissioners perspective, when the proposal was received it outlined benefits, how it can work, how it can not work but all generalizations that are not solidified in any answers. Traffic and noise keep being mentioned, but it is a deeper though process, because it is not just traffic, it is traffic in a suburban neighborhood where kids walk to the park, library and can't fathom how it could support \$5500 people. The community who lives in the area cannot be trumped to justify a benefit to the city. The ideas have to be further and there needs to be understanding of how it impacts the community, how the benefits outweigh every person against it.

In response, Mr. Enzenberger stated that Commissioner Aranda is right, but the permitting and planning process will be extremely robust and during that process is where those conversations would take place, and all the concerns mentioned by the Commissioner's and Public would be addressed. As Aaron Smith stated in June's meeting, if the project could not get through the planning and permitting process the project would be dead. Mr. Enzenberger stated he is not well informed on the process, but Washoe County staff is.

In response, Commissioner Aranda, stated that the process is broken as seen with Reno Ice. He is not opposed to the Ice Rink and uses it but was never told about it until it was approved. Mr. Enzenberger stated they cannot create a new process; they can only follow the rules.

Commissioner Gertler stated that everyone has made great points, but as Deputy District Attorney Kaplan advised, the commission is to decide if it is appropriate for the park. Commissioner Gertler stated there is already another proposal for another stadium in Reno and doesn't feel there needs to be two, there is limited park space that this stadium would take up and the vast majority of the community does not want it.

In response to Chair Joell's question about the ice rink being on the park's master plan, Eric Crump stated the unsolicited proposal received for Reno Ice kicked off the update to the South Valleys Regional Park master plan and ultimately became included.

Motion by Commissioner Neumann to not recommend approval the soccer stadium and that staff should not move forward in negotiating the proposal. Second by Commissioner Jones.

Chair Joell stated he loved the idea when it came before the commission but as more information came or didn't come, it raised more questions. Chair Joell stated parks are special places and especially in this case, where land was donated for park use. There are no opportunities to go out and buy private land to turn into parks due to lack of funding. Chair Joell stated he loves the idea of a pro soccer team, stadium and providing opportunities for recreation and entertainment, but does not think it belongs at South Valleys. He has concerns about how the design, construction and long-term maintenance costs would be shared to ensure it does not fall on the taxpayers and is strongly opposed to the consideration.

Motion by Commissioner Neumann to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners not support the unsolicited proposal from Wendy W. Damonte representing For Our Fans Foundation, a Nevada nonprofit corporation for an outdoor soccer stadium and training facility at Washoe County's South Valleys Regional Park. Staff should not move forward with negotiations on the unsolicited proposal. Second by Commissioner Aranda. Vote was 8-0 for denial of support, Commissioner Kearney was absent.

Public comment by Justin Worthley, Mr. Worthley stated the works with Odyssey engineering and is currently working with Mr. Radow and Sports Logic on completing the necessary permits to construct the soccer fields and grandstand along 395. Mr. Worthley stated that presently have received approval for grading and a retaining wall permits for the site, the site improvement plan is currently under review with the City of Reno.

Public comment by Kevin Curtis, Mr. Curtis stated he is the current President of Done Right Insurance Consulting and wanted to let the Commission know that Battleborn Football Club has been properly insured and bonded through their entire process.

Public comment by Brian Bosma, Mr. Bosma stated he is the Vice President of Partners and Programs – Reno/Sparks Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Bosma is advocating for their member, Battleborn FC regarding the proposal of allocation of public land for a soccer stadium at South Valleys Regional Park. Mr. Bosma stated that as of last week, almost nobody knew of the deal, and it is alarming how far the process has come without due diligence. The lack of transparency is alarming, and it is discouraging that Washoe County has already received a payment of \$20 for 20 years with a formal ground lease drafted for an organization that has no established branding. Mr. Bosma stated that a project of this size should not be contingent on getting viable public land for \$1 per year when similar projects are further advanced and privately financed. Public lands are valuable community assets, and the allocation must be handled with care and diligence. A letter dated January 31st, 2024, to Washoe County Manager's Office on behalf of For Our Fans Foundation had questionable statements: in section one on meeting the valuation for the unsolicited proposal stated it is unique and innovative and there are no soccer stadiums plans in Reno or Sparks, but a simple search can show that the Reno Planning Committee gave approval for a 5,000 seat soccer stadium in May 2023 in a better suited location and has been vetted by City of Reno and Battleborn FC. The letter also stated that the interested party owns exclusive rights to purchase USL franchises in Reno, and that statement should give pause on who is really benefiting from the agreement. The letter stated that there are no apparent obstacles in the proposal, and it is feasible in every way – financially, legally, economically, socially and technically. Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce would like to emphasize there is no signed support from the neighborhood on the project, no community town halls completed by the Commission, no traffic or easement assessments, no environmental impact reports, and no financial disclosures to back up the claim. After reviewing the hundreds of digital submissions opposing the project, it should be made clear that the project lacks public support, and that the organization's claim it has. The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce implores the Commission to halt the project until due process is followed to ensure full transparency, fairness and community input on how public lands are used.

Public comment by Marc Radow, Mr. Radow thanked the commission and public for being there. Mr. Radow stated that the silver lining is people coming together

to make a difference and his faith in the process has been restored. Mr. Radow stated that Ms. Damonte and FOFF's hearts are in the right places and would like to work together.

Public comment by Joey Gilbert, Mr. Gilbert stated that he is the lawyer and full transparency advisor to Battleborn FC. Mr. Gilbert believes the deed restriction would have caused serious problems, and NRS 244.2815 would have had some problems. Mr. Gilbert stated he planned to speak in opposition and ask the Commission to do what they already did and thanked the Commission for listening to the community.

Public comment by Jennifer Jay, Ms. Jay stated that she lives in the Mountain Gate Subdivision, located less than .3 miles from the proposed stadium. Mr. Jay stated that she and her neighbors did not know about the proposal. Ms. Damonte has stated that people want to live near these stadiums, and are not worried about noise, but Ms. Jay stated people live in the area of South Reno, because it's quiet with dark night skies and open spaces. The neighborhood is worried about noise, congestion, crime, light pollution and other environmental impacts that a stadium would cause in that location. Ms. Jay stated she lived in a residential area in another county near a large arena with a capacity of up to 12,500 people, when that area has certain special events, gas stations and shopping centers would have to blockade their driveways to prevent looting and vandalism from the non-locals.

Ms. Jay stated that the roads in South Reno are not built to support large capacity events and increased law enforcement would be required. Ms. Jay stated that when she moved to the area, she researched the general plan for South Valleys Regional Park, which included fields for kids and families, nearby residents do not want to live near a stadium. Ms. Jay stated she does not know who Ms. Damonte is speaking of wanting to live near a stadium in her proposal as it is her not her or her neighbors. Ms. Jay stated that Ms. Damonte is the executive director of Martis Camp in Truckee, California, which is a 2,177-acre private, luxury ski & golf community and suggested to build the stadium there or near her own residence.

Public comment by John Woodworth, Mr. Woodworth stated he is a resident of Mountain Gate, and thanked for Commissioners for asking the right questions and acting admirably and honorably, and for listening to people's sincere feedback that was received by e-mail. Mr. Woodworth stated the Commissioners have every right to be offended by the deceit and duplicity on display and urges them to take it into considerations on future votes of this kind. Mr. Woodworth stated that Wendy Damonte does not speak for Reno.

Public comment by Kate Vineyard, Ms. Vineyard stated the Commissioners covered all of her concerns and thanked them.

Public comment by Claudia Fisher, Ms. Fisher stated that she is a resident of Caughlin Ranch and thanked the Commissioners for their due diligence and support to the community. Ms. Fisher stated all residents of Reno and Washoe County have a vested interest in parks and need to be advised of any projects or changes and stated that she had no knowledge of the proposal until a few days ago.

Public comment by Steve Baker, Mr. Baker stated he is a resident of Mountain Gate and the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Homeowner's Association. Mr. Baker thanked the commissioners and stated they were government in action – great public input, representatives listening to the public and doing the right thing. Mr. Baker stated the Commissioners embodied the Mission Statement of Park Commission. Mr. Baker stated that the two proposing parties bury the hatchet and have a fantastic soccer stadium on private land.

Public comment by Sandra Pazen, Ms. Pazen thanked the Commissioners and stated that the park is a place to take children, they don't want people parking on their street. Requests that in the future, residents can know about these types of items sooner as they pay taxes and support businesses.

Public comment by Eric Blanton, Mr. Blanton stated he is the current President of Washoe Little League, and their league is hosted at South Valleys. Mr. Blanton wanted to clear up the record on a statement that was made at the June 24, 2024, meeting that Washoe Little League is in support, the statement is false, and they have not had any conversations with the stadium group. Washoe Little League has invited Ms. Damonte to their meeting Sunday, July 28, 2024. Mr. Blanton stated a Board Meeting did a discovery meeting with the group in January but to this point, that is the most engagement they have had. To state that Washoe Little League is on board and supporting the project is misleading. Washoe Little League is proud of the South Valleys area and would like to see it grow and do what they can to help push development forward.

Commissioner Neumann thanked everyone for coming and reminded them that Park Commission is an advisory board, and their recommendations will go to the Board of County Commissioners who will make the final decision to move forward or not. Commissioner Neumann stated they need to come to the County Commissioner meeting as well.

Public comment by Penny Brock, Ms. Brock thanked the Commissioners for how they plan to vote and stated she attends every Board of County Commissioners Meeting. Ms. Brock stated that South Valleys is a heavily taxed area and more of those dollars should be going to the South Valleys Regional Park. Ms. Brock stated there is a Citizen Advisory Board Meeting on August 7th, and stated everyone in attendance should attend it as well as the Board of County Commissioner Meeting. Ms. Brock stated there should have been an attachment to the proposal, it should have been public information.

Chair Joell stated the agenda did contain a link to the proposal but would not be included on the printed agenda.

In response to Commissioner Rode's question about the misrepresentations in the proposal and the information being sent to the County Commissioners, Chair Joell and Brandon Roman stated that all public comments received as of 10am this morning were forwarded to the Park Commissioners and County Commissioners as well as posted online. Anything sent after 10am today will be posted online tomorrow, July 25th, 2024. Chair Joell and Commissioner Jones stated the motion as read by Commissioner Neumann is adequate.

Public comment from Marie Rodriguez, Ms. Rodriguez stated that a lot of her concerns were addressed, and that she also sits on some advisory boards, and she is very impressed by the due diligence shown by the Commissioners. Early on, she felt that the proposing party was not forthcoming with all the information and was not following up on commissioner recommendations, a lot was revealed by Commissioners asking the right questions and she is thankful.

Public comment by Linda Sinclair, Ms. Sinclair told the Commissioners they did a great job.

Public comment by Val White, Ms. White thanked the Commissioners for doing their research and not just following recommendations, as well as Commissioner Neumann for reminding the public to comment further at the Board of County Commission meeting and agreed they need to follow up at that meeting. Ms. White stated that she researched parks in the South Reno west of Virginia street and there are only 2 or 3 with very small acreage so it is important to protect South Valleys, because even if it is sagebrush, grass or fields, it is still open space and healthy.

Public comment by Michael Hudson, Mr. Hudson stated that he lives in South Valleys and thanked Commissioners for getting to the right answer and discovering questionable practices. Mr. Hudson stated that he has a background in the Marines and law enforcement, he stated that are numerous studies that will report and increase in crime, trafficking, drug use and drunk driving that come with venues likes this. Traffic is an issue, but safety is the primary concern.

Public comment by Dave Keyes, Mr. Keyes stated that he listened to the May 2024 meeting and attended the June 2024 meeting and was frustrated by the lack of straight information from FOFF and leaving the Commission in charge of the guess work. He stated he is a date driven person and asked at every opportunity for an idea to see how much park space the stadium would take over and how much would be left, but the proposing party was not forthcoming. Mr. Keyes researched and found that a USL Stadium, as of April 1st, has to be 120 x 70 yard minimum, and counted parking spaces with 9-foot width, 1500 spaces for a 5,500-seat stadium so is unsure where the other parking would be going. Mr. Keyes thanked the Commissioners for being a steward for the parks and land that was donated 15 years ago and realizing that some information is not accurate. Separately from the stadium, Mr. Keyes stated he has concern for a fire in the undeveloped area that is just sagebrush, grass and weeds, which are the most flammable things. If struck by lightning the City and County could be found liable for removing the residents.

Public comment by Dan Gallagher, Washoe Little League. Mr. Gallagher stated that he has been leading a volunteer group to help develop the park with volunteers out of Washoe Little League for the last 3 years. Mr. Gallagher stated that it was shocking to see the designs commissioned by FOFF showing about 65% of the area being a stadium and parking lot and disheartening that it was even being entertained. Mr. Gallagher stated he was proud of the community for speaking up, as the proposal doesn't hit the spirit of master plan or land donation. Washoe Little League is here to get going, and understands \$2.8 million won't get it completed, but coupled with grassroots momentum, fundraising in a phased approach with an interested to be done in the right way that is already happening, they are working with DOW Engineering and Park Staff to get moving. It is a harder process, and harder to find donors versus investors but the Community is willing to do it, and Mr. Gallagher is proud of Commissioners for taking the right steps to get the project voted down.

Public comment by Francis Tryou, Ms. Tryou stated she has been a resident for 55 years and has seen the landscape change for the worse. She stated she loves the

sagebrush and takes her dogs out to South Valleys every day. Ms. Tryou thanked the Commissioners for their due diligence and keeping to the mission statement.

Public comment by Steve Arcangeli, Mr. Arcangeli, Mr. Arcangeli stated he lives in Mountain Gate and appreciates that the Commissioners voted against the project. He stated the system is broken, and that he cancelled his patients to attend this meeting and will cancel them again for the Board of County Commissioners Meeting to make certain that they go by Park Commissioner's recommendation.

Public comment by Eugene Lee, Mr. Lee stated he is proud to be in Reno and has been here for 2 decades, but the biggest concern that came from today was the backdoor deal of Washoe County accepting a lease for \$1 per year and would like to know who accepted that and see more transparency in these deals. In response, Chair Joell stated that the \$1 per year was a proposal, and there was no lease agreement signed. The \$1 was a placeholder until the land is appraised.

Eric Crump stated that there has been no agreement executed, the authority to execute such an agreement would be done by the Board of County Commissioners, and what was presented in the May meeting was a draft of what could potentially be considered a lease agreement.

Public comment by Nicol Herris, Ms. Herris stated that has the e-mail list of people who would like to be informed about future meetings on the stadium subject. Ms. Herris stated she believes the devastating flooding in Hidden Valleys stems from Parks as well. She stated there are soccer fields in South Valleys and doesn't know what the policies and plans are but would like to know as a resident and any way to share information with the neighborhood would be appreciated. Ms. Herris also stated that it is important to get information to the neighborhood for these types of meetings, believes residents have a right to be notified. She also thanked Commissioners for voting not to approve of this and will be at the Board of County Commissioners Meeting. Chair Joell requested the e-mail list be added to the list of interested parties for Park Commission.

Chair Joell stated you can sign up for alerts and issues in your neighborhood from the Communications Division of the Washoe County website. Commissioner Neumann added that it is called The Hub, under the Washoe County page. Chair Joell stated the meetings are also on the You Tube channel as well as past videos and minutes posted on the Boards and Commissions page of the Washoe County website, or the Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space Commission page.

Next meeting is in September and is always the third Wednesday of every other month, agenda is normally posted about a week before the meeting.

Public comment by Karen Mullen via Zoom, Ms. Mullen stated she is a former Director for Washoe County parks and was involved in the negotiations for the land exchange. Calculations were done to determine how much land would be needed for sports, and in the master planning process, was looked at to see where park land would be needed in the future, which was done at all parks. Ms. Mullen stated that proposals like this happen often and needs more oversight. Just because the land is open does not mean it's up and suggests putting deed restrictions on all park plans so it doesn't continue to come up.

Chair Joell restated the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Joell called for a 10-minute recess.

12. Parks Reports

Chair Joell asked Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent about the damage at Hidden Valley Park. Colleen stated that the park is closed but staff is working on doing emergency work to get the dog park, tennis courts, and both sides of the park open. As soon as roads are cleared and it can be safe to the public, it will re-open.

In regard to Chair Joell's question on the flood management and who is responsible for maintaining the flood management features, Colleen stated that she is meeting with the engineering team and stormwater management tomorrow.

Director Crump added that there are few drainage features throughout Hidden Valley, a couple of detention basins in the park that are very old, the infrastructure that is associated with the drainage throughout the neighborhood, was acquired from BLM and was likely put in at that time. The maintenance does not fall on parks, and there are reports that it was a 200-year event so no amount of storm drainage can accommodate that kind of storm.

13. Director's Report

Director Crump stated that the agenda for the August 20th Board of County Commissioners Meeting is heavy and the stadium item from today may not be on the agenda until August 27th.

On June 25th, the Board of County Commissioners approved easements for the City of Reno Plumas Street sidewalk improvements. They approved the Chapter 95 fine schedule for Parks. They accepted a State of Nevada, Division of Parks Rec Trails

grant in the amount of \$87,000 for the Hidden Valley Trail System and improvements for Phase 1. The easement exchange agreement for Sunny Hills was pulled from the agenda based on comments received, and staff is working with the community and plans to take it back to the Board. The Board accepted a \$300,000 annual grant from the Wilbur D May Foundation, received for operation of the Museum & Arboretum. In July the Board approved the non-funded cost share agreement with USFS for continued maintenance of Whites Creek, Thomas Creek and the Michael D Thompson trailhead.

In response to Commissioner Neumann's question about the Sun Valley BMX Park, Mr. Crump stated that the Planning Commission approved the special use permit, but it has not gone to the Board of County Commissioners.

In response to Commissioner Aranda's question about the Regional Shooting Facility agreement, Eric stated it was approved and is fully operated by the awarding party and can bring the vendor back for a first quarter presentation/update in winter.

14. Commissioner Request for future agenda items

Commissioner Neumann requested discussing deed restrictions on parks.

Commissioner Gertler requested a discussion around when it would be appropriate to do more scoping before a project goes into planning.

15. Public comments

No public comment.

16. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at **5:28pm.**

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Roebuck, Office Specialist

Chair Kevin Joell