



George Chachas addressed the Board and stated that he attended the Regional Planning Commission meeting on 9/15/21 and heard a couple express their concerns with the contracted Building Inspector, Brad Christiansen, and the way he was holding up the construction of their home. They asserted that Brad made that couple build a foundation higher than anyone else on Stevens Avenue or in the area. He noted some curb and gutter installed across from this couple where the curb was laid 6 inches below the street. He angrily stated that the selective enforcement and double standards need to stop. In regards to the Building Official item, this Board needs to get rid of Brad and hire someone who knows what they're doing and is friendly. In regards to the item pertaining to COVID, this Board needs to take a more conservative approach. Mr. Chachas asked how this Board can accept the COVID American Rescue Grant funding if we aren't complying with the mandates and restrictions. Time was called.

**1. NOTICE OF TIMED AGENDA ITEMS:**

**A. 9:05 A.M. UPDATE FROM BCT**

**1) Discussion/Update: Quarterly Report on Information Technology from Business Continuity Technology (BCT). Earle Keizer, Melvin Chatman, Jr.**

Melvin Chatman, Jr. was present with Manny Rosales, both from BCT, and Earle Keizer was present via Zoom. As of July, Lester Keizer retired from BCT officially leaving Earle as the CEO and president. Melvin is the COO and presented a PowerPoint Presentation. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter they closed 145 tickets and worked 298 man hours for the County and made other accomplishments. He discussed the items that still remain to be done including cross training, vendor management, reviewing an incident response plan, and IBM server technology.

Manny discussed email viruses and SPAM threats received which were displayed on a graph. He reported that automatic backups have been done and our firewall protection is properly functioning. Network infrastructure for the Justice Center is in the final phases and all equipment has been received. High speed internet and fiber is in place and operational. JAVS will be installed in 2 weeks. Digital signage is in progress and everything else is on track.

Via Zoom, Earle Keizer mentioned that Lester retired for medical reasons and reminded the Board that BCT is committed to WPC. Melvin suggested people not use the same password for everything because bad people are working hard to break into our accounts. Manny explained 60% of tickets that come from County employees are day to day stuff while 30% are bigger issues with 10% being miscellaneous. The majority of man hours go toward the 30% of the tickets. Earle offered a breakdown if anyone needed one. Chairman Howe thanked BCT for what they do and for their presentation.

**C. 10:00 A.M. NATURAL RESOURCES**

**1) Discussion only: regarding the White Pine County Natural Resource and Public Land Issues Tracking List. Jeremy Drew, RCI**

The meeting came back into session at 10:09 am and Jeremy Drew from RCI addressed the Board via Zoom with his update which was contained in the backup material.

**D. 10:15 A.M. WILDLIFE PRESERVE**

**\*1) Discussion/For Possible Action: approval to determine that operating a "big cat" sanctuary in parcels zoned O-5 is/is not similar to uses defined in White Pine County Ordinance 17.24.020, and therefore permitted/not permitted. James L. Buchal, Murphy & Buchal LLP**

Attorney James Buchal addressed the Board via Zoom and noted the local ordinances for zoning. The Tiger Preservation Center is looking for a new home for 24 exotic animals. They could be an asset to the County by being a preserve and a rehab for cats in need. He asked if a big cat sanctuary is considered "similar" to other allowable uses allowed under zone O5. He introduced Robert and Bonnie Ringo, the owners, to answer any questions. DA James Beecher commented that preserves are there to preserve the natural flora and fauna of an area, so this will not be a preserve as defined in ordinance and he was unable to twist the definition of ranch and agricultural zoning to include a big cat sanctuary. If this Board deems this sanctuary as anything similar to what is listed in ordinance for O5, it would then be permitted and any future sanctuaries could come where without having to come before the Board.

Mr. Ringo, President of the Tiger Preservation Center of Nevada, advised the Board via Zoom that they are moving to Nevada because they are tired of governmental overreach in Oregon and Nevada is friendlier, plus there is more acreage. The animals would be contained in a cage 15-16 feet tall with perimeter fences that are 10 feet tall. He reported that they have never had an escape. Commission Vice Chairman Godon would like a check on the fencing to ensure other local animals are not at risk, otherwise he is ok with this.

Commissioner Bullis thanked them and welcomed them and ensured the Board is practicing its due diligence to make sure this is done cleanly. It was explained by Mr. Ringo that private tours will be offered with special tours for school kids.

Commissioner Carson asked for more information as to the location of this sanctuary as it pertains to roads in that area (near Bassett Lake). DA Beecher reiterated the question at hand; is this similar to the other uses on the list for zone O5? Commissioners Godon and Carson felt a special use permit would be more appropriate and Commissioner Bybee agreed. Mr. Buchal added that the federal government oversees the fences and has strict regulations and he offered to send information about that.

Commission Vice Chairman Godon moved to require a special use permit for the big cat sanctuary and that these people work with the DA on proposed language to ensure checks are put in place for permits and other requirements for the safety of our rural livestock and residents and that a big cat sanctuary is not similar to uses in O5. Per DA Beecher, if an SUP is needed, an ordinance will

need amended to allow this big cat sanctuary to come here with an SUP. Commissioner Carson moved that a big cat sanctuary is not similar as defined in 05 and would not be permitted, as per DA Beecher's advice. It was explained that the ordinance process could take until the meeting in November to approve anything in regards to this. Mr. Buchal noted a chapter on SUPs that may not mean a new ordinance needs to come out and he will talk to the DA about it; they cannot get an SUP at this time until the ordinance is amended. Commission Vice Chairman Godon seconded the motion and it was passed.

## **2. ITEMS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

### **A. COUNTY COMMISSION**

#### **1. Vice Chairman, Travis Godon**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval to update County Personal Policy to include the following:**

- **No County Employee shall ever be required to take any vaccine (including vaccines for COVID-19) as a means for employment, health/dental/vision/life insurance, retirement benefits, and any other benefits/employee programs. No Federal or State vaccine mandate will be adhered to by the County and this policy stands regardless of these governing body's protocol.**
- **No County Employee shall be discriminated against or incentivized based upon vaccination status for any disease (including vaccination for COVID-19).**
- **No County Employee shall be subject to a frequently occurring testing protocol for COVID-19 (or any other similar disease) for the sake of satisfying any State or Federal Mandates/Regulations. Testing can still occur if there is a reasonable cause (exposure, symptoms, etc).**
- **No County Employee shall ever be asked or forced to disclose vaccination status for any disease (including COVID-19).**

Vice Chairman Travis Godon asserted that if the County doesn't stand up against things that are happening, we will lose deputies and employees due to vaccine mandates. The County might get hit with lawsuits, but he does not want to treat County employees like cattle. Sheriff Henriod noted a movement across the country where officers are being required to be vaccinated and they are leaving. He does not expect that here. The State is progressing in that direction and he hopes it never comes here. He does not ask his staff if they are vaccinated and he respects their choices. He supports Commissioner Godon in this as it should be a personal choice to get a vaccine.

Chairman Howe stated that White Pine County is a governmental entity with rules. If this is approved, the County is taking a stance that we will not adhere to mandates for vaccines for employees. He felt good about the 30 day mask mandate, but this makes us a standalone County who is saying no to mandating

employees under any circumstance to being vaccinated or testing. District Attorney James S. Beecher stated that each Commissioner can say what they want to say and his silence does not mean he agrees with or condones what is being said.

Vice Chairman Godon noted that sanctuary cities do not obey State laws and other causes fight like hell for their prerogative, why can't we? Commissioner Bullis stated that we are not disobeying anything when there are governmental entities who are operating outside of their constitutional authority; we are under no obligation to obey. White Pine County needs to stand up to say the State government and the President do not have the legal authority to do this and we will not comply. Neither the Governor, nor the President, have the legal or constitutional authority to institute a vaccine mandate, otherwise we'd end up like Australia who is living in a police state where officers are beating down doors and beating people down who do not have a vaccination status.

Chairman Howe felt it's an individual's prerogative to do what they want, but we are making a choice for employees. It was pointed out that this entitles an employee to make their own decision. Commissioner Bullis explained to Chairman Howe that this proposes to amend the personnel policy that we will never discriminate against an employee based on their private medical decisions. This will give people job security and a peace of mind who are worried about losing their jobs if the County were to allow the mandating. Commissioner Carson did not feel this was necessary and asked if we can postpone this item until after the litigation session to be held after this meeting. DA Beecher advised that there are no present requirements to get vaccines or weekly testing at this time, but this is in anticipation of those mandates coming down.

Commission Vice Chairman Godon felt this gives employees security that the County will stand up for their rights and with that, he made a motion to approve. Commissioner Bybee agreed with this completely and he has had the vaccine which was his choice. The mandates have bled into our State government and we are not far from mandates like these coming from our Governor. Commissioner Carson admitted she may have been ignorant in feeling this was not necessary. DA Beecher advised that if the County does this in advance, we are not reacting and it might be important when it comes to liability. Commissioner Bullis seconded motion. The motion passed 4:1 with Chairman Howe voting in the opposition.

**\*b) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of Resolution 2021-82 in response to Biden Administration's Executive Actions Regarding COVID-19 Mandates**

Commissioner Vice Chairman Travis Godon advised that he gets calls that the public feels were not doing anything in response to President Biden's recent mandates. This action shows this Board's position which falls along the same lines as other resolutions that were passed. DA Beecher read the resolution into the record. It was noted that this is along the same lines as item a. Commissioner

Bybee stated that free COVID tests will become a thing of the past and those not vaccinated might be forced to change their minds.

Commissioner Bullis made the motion to approve and Commissioner Godon made the second. The motion passed with a vote of 4:1 with Chairman Howe voting in opposition.

Chairman Howe called a break at 10:00 am.

## **B. ELECTED OFFICIALS**

### **1. Nichole Baldwin, County Clerk**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval to appoint Cory Lytle to the vacant seat on the Agricultural District 13/Fair & Rodeo Board as an at large member**

Commissioner Ian Bullis moved to approve this appointment and Commissioner Vice Chairman Godon made the second. Motion passed.

**\*b) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval to set the schedule for regular Commission Meetings during the months of November and December 2021**

Commissioner Bullis suggested holding one meeting in November on the 17<sup>th</sup>. There was discussion about the schedule for the hiring process of the County Manager position. Commissioner Shane Bybee suggested holding the regular meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup> and a special meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup>, with no meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and he motioned for that. Commissioner Carson seconded the motion. Commissioner Bybee amended his motion to include holding one big meeting in December on December 15<sup>th</sup> with no other meetings in that month. Commissioner Carson amended her second and the motion passed.

## **C. DEPARTMENT HEADS**

### **1. Brett North, Emergency Management Director**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval Of The FY 2021 Hazardous Material Emergency Planning (HMEP) Mid-Cycle Grant Award From Nevada State Emergency Response Commission In The Amount Of \$13,010.00 For The Period Of July 1st, 2021 Through September 30th, 2021. The Required County Match Amount Is \$0**

At 10:41 am, Finance Director Elizabeth Frances handled this item for Chief North. Commissioner Carson moved for approval and Commission Vice Chairman Godon seconded the motion, which passed.

### **2. Lori Romero, Library Director**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval to accept the 2021 LSTA ARP Act Grant in the amount of \$20,000.00 to purchase a Wireless Access Point and 13 laptops with no required match**

Library Director Lori Romero advised that this money was used to purchase a wireless access point to extend the wireless signal outside along with 13 laptops. She opened the third study room and all 3 rooms have been booked and the laptops have been used by all ages. Commissioner Ian Bullis made the motion to approve this item and Commissioner Vice Chairman Godon made the second. Motion passed.

**3. Desiree Barnson, Social Services Director**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Ratification of the ESG Grant Award in the amount of \$3,048.00 with a required match of \$3,048.00 which will be in-kind as the Director's wages**

Commissioner Bybee moved for approval and Commissioner Bullis made the second; motion passed.

**\*b) Discussion/For Possible Action: Ratification of the WSAP Grant Award in the amount of \$4,759.70 with no required match**

Commissioner Carson moved to approve and Commissioner Bybee made the second. Motion passed.

**\*c) Discussion/For Possible Action: Ratification of the CSBG Family Resource Grant Award in the amount of \$20,760.00 with a required match of \$2,076.00 which will be in-kind as Director's wages**

Commission Vice Chairman Godon motioned for approval and Commissioner Bullis made the second. Motion passed.

**\*d) Discussion/For Possible Action: Ratification of the NDOT 5311 Grant Award in the amount of \$259,398.00 with a required match of \$145,432.00 which are RTC donations of \$30,000 per year, a Mt. Wheeler Power donation of \$27,000.00, and ADSD funds of \$30,000.00 per year**

Commissioner Carson made the motion to approve and Commissioner Bybee made the second. Motion passed.

**\*e) Discussion/For Possible Action: Ratification of the ADSD Grant in the amount of \$30,000.00 per year with a required match of \$4,500.00 per year which is in-kind as Director's wages**

Commissioner Bullis moved for approval and Commissioner Carson seconded the motion, which passed.

Chairman Richard Howe left to room at 10:46 am and Vice Chairman Godon took over the meeting.

**4. Elizabeth Frances, Finance Director/Interim HR Director**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of the Notice of Completion for the Nevada Northern Railway Trail Phase II project**

Commissioner Bullis moved for approval. Commissioner Carson seconded the motion, which passed 4:0.

**\*b) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of the U.S. Department of the Treasury Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund Award Terms and Conditions for Receiving the American Rescue Plan Act Funding**

Commissioner Bybee made the motion to approve the item and Commissioner Carson made the second and the motion passed 4:0.

Chairman Howe returned and took over the meeting at 10:47 am.

**\*c) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of Information Technology Engineer job description**

Commissioner Carson moved to approve this item and Commissioner Bullis made the second. Motion passed.

**\*d) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of Information Technology Engineer Pay Scale**

Finance Director Frances explained the pay ranges and national averages as shown in the backup material. Commissioner Bullis moved to approve a starting salary of \$85,000.00. Commission Vice Chairman Godon made the second and the motion passed.

**\*e) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval begin recruiting efforts for Information Technology Engineer**

Commission Vice Chairman Godon moved for approval and Commissioner Bullis seconded the motion and it passed.

**\*f) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of recruiting schedule/process for County Manager**

Director Frances advised the Board that she received a considerable number of applications. She proposed they advertise thru October 8<sup>th</sup> and establish an application process that includes 3 teams consisting of other elected officials (not Commissioners), local business owners, and the third representing outside entities like NACO or other counties with County Managers in an effort to get outside input. The teams will evaluate the applications, conduct preliminary interviews in October, compile a short list of top picks in November, run reference checks, and put on presentations and interviews with this Board with possible selection on November 17<sup>th</sup>. She recommended the final candidates be brought in for a tour and reception, do background checks, and make a final offer in December. It was clarified that the same limitations and liabilities exist for a County Manager as for everyone else in regards to Open Meeting Law. It was discussed how many top- end applications would come before the Board and that will be left to Director Frances' discretion. Commissioner Godon moved to



approve this item as presented with Director Frances to bring 3-5 candidates to the Commission at her discretion. Commissioner Carson made the second and the motion passed.

**\*g) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of request from Douglas County to provide additional funding for China Springs Camp in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 in the amount not to exceed \$27,596.38**

Director Frances explained that the amount Douglas County has requested covers 2 fiscal years and that this is a much needed resource for our local Juvenile Probation Department and we need to share in the costs to keep it afloat. Commissioner Bybee moved for approval and Commissioner Bullis made the second. Motion passed.

**\*h) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of option for building official services**

Director Frances explained that this has been a slow process due to trouble getting data to provide to companies. Brad Christiansen will continue with his current contract with the City. The City has one applicant to be interviewed in early October. Commissioner Carson handed out information in regards to the building code adoptions as provided by the Northern Nevada Chapter International Code Council. She has a call into the President of this council to help us out to get our codes where they need to be. This item was left as discussion only.

**\*i) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of amended and restated Telecommunications Service Agreement between White Pine County and WestNet Nevada, LLC**

Commission Vice Chairman Godon moved for approval and Commissioner Bybee seconded the motion, which passed.

**\*j) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval to utilize an amount not to exceed \$25,000 to install new low voltage infrastructure in the public safety building with funds taken from contingency**

Commissioner Bullis moved to approve this item and Commissioner Carson made the second. Motion passed.

**k) Discussion/Update: Planned meeting for the evening of Wednesday, October 13, 2021 for the Nevada American Recovery Plan Listening Tour**

This is for Governor Sisolak's 75 stops in 75 days. It will be a town hall meeting held at the Convention Center on October 13<sup>th</sup> from 6 pm to 7:30 pm. A survey was provided in the backup material and everyone was encouraged by Director Frances to take it.

**\*1) Discussion/For Possible Action: Ideas for and approval of ribbon cutting ceremony for the Justice Center Project on the afternoon of October 27, 2021**

Director Frances advised that the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Justice Center is slated for October 27<sup>th</sup> following the Commission Meeting. Chairman Howe suggested inviting Senator Goicoechea, Assemblyman Ellison, current and retired Judges, and the public. She was further suggested to invite Mt. Wheeler Power, the Governor, the Mayor, City Council, and the previous District Attorney. Director Frances will provide refreshments. Commissioner Bullis moved to approve to hold this event to begin at 2:00 pm and Commissioner Godon made the second. Motion passed.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

The following are "action" items that may be considered in one motion/one vote. They are considered routine, non-public hearing items that have no protests. Any person representing an item or member of the public not in agreement with the recommendations by staff should request to have that item removed from the Consent Agenda. Any County Commissioner may remove any items from the consent agenda and have it placed in the Action Items.

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: to ratify Correspondence Sent on Behalf of the White Pine County Commission.**

**\*b) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of Payroll for County Elected Officials.**

**\*c) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of HR Transmittal for Payroll Changes.**

**\*d) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of budget transfers within and between functions or programs within a fund that do not increase the total appropriation of the fund.**

Commissioner Shane Bybee moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Commissioner Laurie L. Carson made the second. Motion passed.

**4. UNTIMED ITEMS**

**\*a) Discussion/for Possible Action: Approval for minutes of the County Commission meeting held:**

- **Special Joint July 21, 2021**
- **August 25, 2021**
- **September 8, 2021**

Commissioner Carson moved to approve all minutes and Commissioner Vice Chairman Godon seconded the motion, which passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commission Vice Chairman Godon moved to adjourn. Commissioner Bullis seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:17 am.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**WHITE PINE COUNTY  
STATE OF NEVADA**

**BY:**

*Richard A...*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHAIRMAN**

**ATTEST:**

*W. Daldwin*

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**WPC CLERK OF THE BOARD**