

NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (NACO)

Board of Directors' Meeting

February 21, 2025, 9:30am

NACO Conference Room

304 S. Minnesota Street

Carson City, NV 89703

ADOPTED MINUTES

Attendance: President Andreozzi, President Elect Gardner, Churchill County Commissioner Getto, Clark County Commissioner Kirkpatrick, Esmeralda County Commissioner Perez, Humboldt County Commissioner Tipton, Lander County Commissioner Helming, Lincoln County Commissioner Reese, Lyon County Commissioner Keller, Nye County Commissioner Boskovich, Pershing County Commissioner Crim, Washoe County Commissioner Herman, White Pine County Commissioner VanCamp and NACO Staff (Vinson Guthreau, Jennifer Berthiaume and Amanda Berg)

Affiliate Attendance: Karyn Smith, Nevada Association of County Human Services Administrators

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m.

1. **Public Comment.** None was given.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** The agenda was approved on a motion by President Elect Gardner with second by Commissioner Keller.
3. **NACO President's Report.** President Andreozzi informed the Board that he was looking forward to his first National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference and thanked Storey County for helping to host the dinner that will be held for Nevada attendees. He then spoke about AB519 from the 2023 Legislative Session that addressed school district funding for rural areas, specifically the portion that addressed Elko County specifically and required the institution of a property tax that would have put the County over the property tax cap that is currently in place. President Andreozzi then informed the Board that Elko County had sued over that provision and recently won the case, noting that specific portion of the legislation is unconstitutional because it singled out a specific taxing entity. President Andreozzi stated that the decision sets precedent that will preclude the Legislature from taking similar actions in the future and concluded his remarks by noting that the County did set aside twenty cents of their property tax school capital improvements.
4. **NACO Executive Director's Report.** Vinson also remarked on the upcoming NACo Legislative Conference, noting that with the Legislature in Session it is a bit of a juggle but that he was looking forward to the dinner and informed the Board that a Nevada specific schedule for the event would be distributed to registrants the following week. Vinson then reminded the Board that the Guinn Center is currently run by former Assemblymember Jill Toles and informed them that they had recently completed a housing study which NACO had contributed to. He informed the Board that the final study was 150 pages, but that a link would be included in the summary of the Board meeting. He concluded his remarks by noting that the study included information on federal land disposals that they had recently received a presentation on from the Bureau of Land Management.

5. **Approval of Minutes of January 31, 2025, NACO Board of Directors Meeting.** The minutes were approved as presented on a motion by Commissioner Tipton with second by Commissioner Keller.
6. **Discussion and Approval of NACO's 2025 Federal Priorities.** Jennifer reminded the Board that the document is produced annually and is assistive with framing the conversations with the Federal Delegation at the NACO Legislative Conference. She drew their attention to the draft included in the agenda packet, noting that yellow highlighted content is new and that red strike through will be deleted. Jennifer informed the Board that she had received no feedback from the initial presentation of the draft in January. President Elect Gardner remarked on the new section that addresses Artificial Intelligence and noted that Douglas County had recently adopted a policy even though the technology is new and evolving, specifically noting a clause regarding appropriate content. Jennifer stated that the section has been a focus of NACO, and everyone is watching the emerging technology closely. The 2025 NACO Federal Priorities were approved on a motion by Commissioner Tipton with second by Commissioner Keller.
7. **Presentation From the Nevada Secretary of State's Office Regarding Existing County Responsibilities Regarding Election Administration, Mark Wlaschin, Deputy Secretary of State for Elections.** Mr. Wlaschin thanked the Board for the opportunity to present to them, noting that the Secretary of State recognizes that the work to administer elections happens at the County level, and is completed by just 150 employees statewide. He gave the Board an overview of his experience and the duties of his position, specifically noting that it is a non-partisan position and that it is his responsibility to ensure elections are executed as existing law dictates and not to set policy, also taking into account that 15 of the State's election officials are elected officials with multiple other responsibilities. Mr. Wlaschin gave an overview of the training that his office conducts with regards to policy and procedures and working knowledge election officials must have regarding multiple acts and existing law and how his office follows existing statutes in the development of their training manuals and the five day conference in which the training is executed, which County Clerks must attend, but staff is also welcome to attend. Including the need to get ahead of turnover in County Clerk offices and the loss of institutional knowledge. Mr. Wlaschin gave the Board an overview of the election calendar for the next several years, including deadlines for the implementation of any new rules or regulations adopted by the Legislature. He concluded his presentation by discussing the creation of a Training Lab that would increase training opportunities for all elected officials and AB237 which would remove the requirement that a county have a population of over 100,000 for a county to create an office of a registrar of voters. Commissioner VanCamp inquired as to what would happen if nobody filed to run for an open Commission seat and it was clarified that the Governor would appoint an individual to the seat. President Andreozzi thanked Mr. Wlaschin for his presentation, noting that he appreciates his approach to his position and the administration of the State's elections. President Elect Gardner noted that Douglas County had recently removed their Public Administrator from an elected position and issues with people who are not registered to vote running for commission seats and how AB14 is trying to close that gap. Mr. Wlaschin stated that he has not heard anything from the Secretary of State regarding the Bill. President Andreozzi thanked Mr. Wlaschin for his military service and Mr. Wlaschin closed his presentation by noting that seeing the community impacts that his service to the State and local governments has been immensely rewarding.
8. **Discussion and Possible Appointment for One (1) of NACO's Appointments to the National Association of Counties (NACO) Board of Directors.** President Andreozzi

informed the Board that two letters of interest were received, one included in the agenda packet, and one sent earlier in the morning. He noted that Commissioner Kirkpatrick provides the State's urban prospective on the NACo Board and that Nevada is in a unique position as having 100% membership in the National Association allows for two representatives appointed by NACO. President Andreozzi thanked both President Elect Gardner and Commissioner Keller for their interest in the appointment and that both would have three minutes to explain to the Board why they are interested in the position. Commissioner Keller reminded the Board that he has been active with both NACO and the National Association for some time and informed them that he had gotten off all other Commission appointments to serve on the NACO Board. Commissioner Keller noted that it takes time to build relationships at the National level and reminded them that he sits as the Vice Chair of the Rural Action Caucus (RAC), which works hand in hand with the Western Interstate Region (WIR) and Large Urban Caucus. He noted that he has attended all national conferences since his election to the Lyon County Commission and the county has paid for all his travel expenses. President Elect Gardner also stated that he did not expect to have the opportunity to apply for the position held long term by former Lincoln County Commissioner Higbee and noted that he has good and open lines of communication with both Commissioner Kirkpatrick and Mr. Higbee to utilize their institutional knowledge as he becomes acquainted with the position. He also stated that he has attended all National Conferences and noted that having two people committed and qualified to hold the position is a good thing and welcomed questions from the Board. Commissioner Helming inquired as to whether both Commissioners would still attend the National meetings regardless of receiving the appointment and both stated that they would, the appoint just adds voting power to their attendance. Commissioner Kirkpatrick noted that she does not attend all the meetings in person but that she has a vast number of duties on the Board. She stated that Nevada has a unique perspective as a "postage stamp" of the makeup of the country which ensures that there are vast opportunities for representation at the National level. She informed the Board that she had made a commitment of support to President Elect Gardner some time ago and that she is working with NACo to ensure each county in Nevada has the opportunity to provide testimony at the National level. Commissioner Kirkpatrick moved to appoint President Elect Gardner but noted that Commissioner Keller would continue to do a fabulous job representing Nevada on the RAC and ensuring the Nevada voice was heard during the vast discussions surrounding the improvements need in the West. President Elect Gardner was appointed to the NACo Board of Directors on Commissioner Kirkpatrick's motion with second by Commissioner Getto. President Elect Gardner thanked the Board for the appointment and thanked Commissioner Keller for his interest in the position and ensured the Board that they would work together on National issues. President Andreozzi closed the item by reiterating that with Commissioner Keller's Presidential appointment to a leadership role on the RAC it expands the Nevada representation on National issues.

9. **Discussion and Possible Approval Regarding the Re-Appointment of Gina Rackley, Humboldt County, to the Committee on Local Government Finance.** President Andreozzi thanked Ms. Rackley for her willingness to continue serving on the Committee and Commissioner Tipton informed the Board that he has worked with Ms. Rackley for nine years and that he is confident in her continued representation. Ms. Rackley was reappointed to the Committee on Local Government Finance on a motion by Commissioner Tipton with second by President Elect Gardner.

10. Update and Possible Action. Regarding Public Lands and Natural Resources Issues Affecting Counties Including:

- a. **Updates from the NACO Public Lands and Natural Resources Subcommittee.** Commissioner Tipton informed the Board that Vinson had spoken about Eureka County Natural Resources Manager, Jake Tibbitts presentation on AB80 regarding soil health. Vinson also announced several nominations for, and appointments to Federal Agencies in Washington DC including Kathleen Sgamma for the Director of the BLM, Brooke Rollins as the Director of the Department of Agriculture and Tom Schultz as the head of the US Forest Service. Commissioner Tipton also informed the Board that Vinson had held a conversation with an applicant for the Natural Resources Manager position and that a formal interview would be conducted. The Board was also reminded that an Amicus Brief was filed in the Baker vs. Holland case through Schroder Law with several other counties, and that other counties had filed separate Briefs through additional firms. The Committee also discussed the Utility Scale Solar RMP noting that an administrative hold had been placed on the ROD, and work is continuing with the Governor's office on the issue. Other discussions included the creation of a template for comment submissions and training on how to write comments and the National Center for Public Lands training being planned for the NEPA process. Wild Horse and Burro issues were also discussed, and it was noted that Former Commissioner Higbee continues to sit on that Resource Action Committee and following a meeting in July, he will provide an update to the Board. The Committee also discussed the lack of meetings being held by SLUPAC due to a vacancy in the Director position and Vinson ensured the Board that the DCNR Director is looking at options for staffing the important Committee. No action was taken.

- 11. NACO Legislative Committee Update Regarding the 83rd Session of the Nevada Legislature and Discussion of Bills Affecting Nevada's Counties.** President Elect Gardner reminded the Board that the Committee meets weekly on Friday through the Legislative Session. He remarked that the Session is moving slowly but Bills are continuing to be dropped daily. President Elect Gardner also noted that several members of the Committee would be at the NACo Legislative Conference the following week and that Jennifer will be in residence in Carson City throughout the Session. He also discussed the loss of institutional knowledge through staff changes and term limits and working with first-year legislators to dial back proposals and remove duplicative bills. Jennifer thanked President Elect Gardner for Chairing the Committee and reminded the Board that it is open to all Commissioners and County staff. She informed the Board that over 200 bills and BDRs were currently being tracked by staff and drew their attention to the Bill Tracker included in the agenda packet, noting that positions have begun to be noted and that the Tracker is now coded according to those positions, also adding that AB80 had been supported following the creation of the Tracker. Jennifer then gave an overview of the status of the Association bills noting that AB14 which would require candidates for Commissioner to be registered voters as well as qualified electors was heard in Assembly Government Affairs on the 12th, and a hearing on AB70 which will allow for the submission of county comments on renewal energy projects is expected to be heard on March 13th. She also informed the Board that meetings were held with stakeholders on SB65 which will clarify what records of a Medical Examiner or Coroner are public and a meeting with the Chair of the Senate Government Affairs Committee would be held the following week on SB73 which proposes to restrict County Clerks from providing copies of registered voters signatures, while still allowing for their in person inspection. Vinson stated that the proposal to restrict the counties to the use of only certain voting equipment under SB100 was the only Bill currently flagged for opposition but that the sponsor was going to bring all those in opposition together for a discussion on the

component that requires the timely completion of duties under penalty of felony charges. President Elect Gardner inquired as to the need for individual Board of Commission actions on NACO positions. Vinson reminded the Board that it is the Association's job to provide support for counties and that the processes of the Legislature do not allow time for official Board actions, but that if the need arises it will be communicated on a case-by-case basis. Commissioner Keller noted that it is appreciated that NACO takes the blame on some issues. It was also noted that although counties have individual lobbyists NACO staff continues to work well and collaboratively with them. Commissioner Reese recommended looking at what is working well in Florida, with regards to the discussion on SB100, and Commissioner Tipton requested support for AB133, which will allow for the creation of a technology fund for Treasurers. President Andreozzi expressed appreciation for the work staff does to keep track of so much legislation and it was noted that the Quad Counties are looking at SB116 regarding the compensation of local elected officials and SB71, which would require local governments to post information on purchasing to websites and create a business advisory council was discussed. Vinson noted that it is a complicated bill with a fiscal impact to counties, also noting that counties don't have the staff capacity to complete the requirements, stating that the change to a resolution to better promote Nevada and small businesses would be a better solution and that he was working to share applicable information.

12. **Updates from Members of the National Association of Counties Board, Western Interstate Region Board, and Individual Counties.** Commissioner Kirkpatrick informed the Board that she had agreed to do a series of tele-townhalls to discuss the budgetary impacts of the proposed Medicaid cuts, which will equal \$4 Billion over four years to Nevada alone. The discussion will include impacts associated with access to care in rural communities and what happens when states make additional mandates to counties. Commissioner Keller informed the Board that the RAC is having discussions on affordable housing, senior citizen food insecurity, workforce issues affecting farmers, the recent cancellation of homeowners insurance policies with no notice, issues with the distribution of FEMA dollars, the expectation of rural hospital closures due to proposed cuts in Medicaid and the expectation of the reconciliation bill in March, which he noted cannot contain any revenue generating language. Commissioner Tipton informed the Board that WIR had met on the sixth and announced a new director for the National Center for Public Lands, Gegory Nelson. He also informed the Board that new By-Law revisions were approved, and the next meeting would be held in May in South Dakota, he also discussed a Fly-In event in Washington in September. Commissioner Tipton also announced the election of a new WIR President who is a Commissioner from the neighboring community of Bridgeport CA. Members of the Board concluded the item by giving updates on activities within their Counties.

13. **Public Comment.** None was given.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.