

NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (NACO)

Board of Directors' Meeting

March 22, 2024, 9:30am

NACO Conference Room

304 S. Minnesota Street

Carson City, NV 89703

ADOPTED MINUTES

Attendance: President Giomi, President Elect Andreozzi, Vice President Gardner, Humboldt County Commissioner Tipton, Lander County Commissioner Helming, Lincoln County Commissioner Reese, Lyon County Commissioner Henderson, Mineral County Commissioner Rubert-Manzini, Nye County Commissioner Boskovich, Storey County Commissioner Carmona, Washoe County Commissioner Andriola, Washoe County Commissioner Herman, White Pine County Commissioner VanCamp and NACO Staff (Vinson Guthreau, Jennifer Berthiaume, Jacob Brinkerhoff, Amy Hyne-Sutherland and Amanda Berg)

The meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m.

1. **Public Comment.** None was given.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** The agenda was approved as presented by consensus of the Board.
3. **NACO President's Report.** President Giomi reminded the Board of the difficulty to schedule meetings with the Federal Delegation during the recent National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference due to the congressional calendar. He then informed the Board that Congressman Amodei was available to meet with the Board on April 26th, the date of the next scheduled Board of Directors meeting, he noted that the timing of the meeting may be adjusted to accommodate the Congressman's schedule and encouraged in person attendance for the meeting. President Giomi also discussed the 100th Anniversary of NACO and the upcoming Annual Conference being hosted by Carson City. He reminded the Board of the research project being done on the history of the Association and informed them that the Carson City Librarian is working on obtaining information and will be available to do a presentation at the conference. He also discussed former Nye County Commissioner Joni Eastley's participation in the research project and read an article obtained by Ms. Eastley from 1925 that presented similar issues to what County Commissions face today. President Giomi concluded his remarks by informing the Board that the President's Reception is currently being planned at the former Nevada State Prison turned museum and outlined the areas of the former prison that will be available to tour during the event.
4. **NACO Executive Director's Report.** Vinson reminded the Board of the upcoming Western Interstate Region (WIR) conference being held in Mariposa County, California in May and noted that early bird registration for the event will end on April 2nd. He also informed the Board that Past President Higbee is exploring the possibility of running for the 2nd Vice President position of WIR and reminded the Board that the election is similar to NACO as the positions eventually ascend to the Presidency of the organization. Vinson also reminded the Board that registration for the NACo Annual Conference, in Hillsborough County, Florida

in July, is open and noted the importance of the election to be held for the NACo 2nd Vice President which will take place at the conference. Vinson concluded his remarks by reminding the Board that there will be Nevada specific events held during the conference for those in attendance.

5. **Approval of Minutes of the February 23, 2024, NACO Board of Directors Meeting.** The minutes were approved as presented on a motion by Commissioner Andriola with second by President Elect Andreozzi.
6. **Approval of a NACO Resolution in Support of National County Government Month (NCGM).** President Giomi read the resolution into the record and reminded the Board that NCGM is an annual event. Vinson encouraged the individual Counties to also pass resolutions in support of NCGM and reminded them of the NACo Toolkit for access to resources to support county efforts in reminding citizens of all that counties do and of the importance of intergovernmental partnerships. The resolution was passed on a motion by Vice President Gardner with second by Commissioner Herman.
7. **Review and Approval of Updates to the NACO Board Meeting Schedule for June 2024.** President Giomi remarked on the lighter agendas typically experienced in the summer months and reminded the Board that he would be absent for the meeting in June. Vinson directed the Board's attention to the approved calendar included in the agenda materials and noted that although in previous years the July meeting had been canceled due to the proximity of the NACo Annual Conference, that Bill Draft Requests (BDRs) are due to the Legislative Counsel Bureau by September 1st and the Board traditionally reviews the proposals twice before approval for submission and therefore the recommendation by staff is to cancel the June meeting instead. Vice President Gardner noted that the June meeting was noted as to be hosted in an Eastern rural county and Vinson acknowledged the approved plan and assured the Board that staff would take care of rescheduling that meeting for either May or August. Commissioner Carson suggested hosting it in Eureka County and taking the opportunity to honor Senator Goicoechea who term's out of legislative service. The cancelation of the June meeting was approved on a motion by Commissioner Andriola with second by President Elect Andreozzi.
8. **Update on Planning Activities for 2024 NACO Annual Conference, Hosted by Carson City.** Amanda thanked Carson City for their engagement and support in planning the conference. She reminded the Board that it will be held September 24th-26th and announced that sponsor registration is expected to open the week of April 22nd with Attendee registration following the first part of June. She also informed the Board that the theme of the conference is "Celebrating a Century of Service."
9. **Possible Selection of one NACO Sponsored Applicant to Attend the National Association of Counties 2024 County Leadership Training Institute in Washington D.C.** President Giomi directed the Board's attention to the summary of the event included in the agenda packet. He reminded the Board that the last two attendees from Nevada were Washoe County Commissioner Hill and former Mineral County Commissioner Hall and that only 30 people are accepted into the training. Vinson noted that the Association's approved budget includes the payment of tuition for the Institute and reminded the Board that the tradition is to alternate applicants from counties with diverse demographics. He also discussed the targeted qualifications suggested for attendance and informed the Board that

staff's recommendation is to send Lyon County Commissioner Hendrix as the applicant for consideration, noting that she is willing and able to attend. Commissioner Hendrix's application for the Institute and the payment of the tuition if she is accepted, was approved on a motion by Commissioner Tipton with second by Commissioner Andriola.

10. **Presentation from NACO and County Natural Resources Staff Regarding Bureau of Land Management Landscape Level Planning.** Jacob reminded the Board that there are multiple efforts by the BLM to implement landscape level planning efforts being spearheaded through Washington D.C., specifically surrounding solar energy and the Greater Sage Grouse. He noted that ten and eleven states are involved in these efforts and that there are significant inadequacies with the cooperating agency engagement with multi-state centralized planning, and the voices of ground level partners not being effectively heard. Jacob informed the Board that the efforts are remarkably similar to the Planning 2.0 BLM planning initiative in 2016, that was struck down by Congress. Through communications with county natural resources staff, and Laura Granier from Holland and Hart, who previously provided legal support to NACO, an advocacy strategy is being developed to bring Congressional attention to these planning efforts by the agency. Jacob also informed the Board that conversations are being had with neighboring states and the Western Interstate Region arm of the National Association of Counties (NACo). Vinson noted that staff brought the item forth to bring those Board members who were not involved in the 2016 discussions and efforts surrounding the Planning 2.0 proposal up to speed on the background surrounding the landscape level planning efforts. He also noted that the efforts are in direct conflict with the Board's position that planning should be done at the state level and not from Washington. Vinson also highlighted the fact that decisions made in Washington are more political in nature than those made at the local level. Vinson also noted that the comprehensive advocacy surrounding the planning efforts began at the local level with county natural resources staff and that initial conversations have been had with Nevada's Congressional Delegation. He also noted that a presentation was given on the current planning efforts at the NACo Legislative Conference in February, and the presenters had no real answers to questions presented at that time. Staff ended the presentation by stressing that multifaceted advocacy efforts will be needed to address the issue. Pam Harrington, Lander County's Natural Resources staff thanked the Board for their support on the issue. Jacob reminded the Board that NACO's former Executive Director, Jeff Fontaine and former Humboldt County Commissioner, Jim French had provided testimony to Congress opposing the Planning 2.0 efforts. President Giomi requested that staff create a summary of the Planning 2.0 efforts and distribute it to the Board. It was noted that Eureka County Natural Resources Manager, Jake Tibbetts, engaged in the efforts to strike down Planning 2.0 and has a lot of history on the subject. It was also noted that a sign on document is currently under development and being circulated for review. Commissioner Tipton stressed the importance for all counties to be aware of and active in the issue, because if the current centralized multi-state planning efforts are allowed to go forward unchallenged, they will be used as precedence and implemented in much broader scopes by federal agencies. President Giomi brought up the efforts to move the BLM headquarters to Colorado under the previous administration and Vinson noted that while it was a promising idea in concept there were underlying nuances that made it unrealistic, specifically the closure of state offices and moving to a regionalized approach. President Elect Andreozzi noted that management from afar does not work and discussed the possibility of addressing the issue at the State Legislature. President Giomi noted that the Legislature would have minimal if any impact on the decisions of the agency, and Jacob discussed the option of creating a coordinating agency at the State. President Giomi closed the item by noting that the idea could be good as long as counties don't lose their voices and requested information

on a proposal for the Legislature to consider be forwarded to Jennifer for the Legislative Committee to discuss further.

- 11. Discussion and Approval of NACO to Join Other Nevada Counties to Engage the Legal Services of Holland & Hart to Draft a Legal Memo Regarding Recent Planning Efforts by the Bureau of Land Management.** Jacob again affirmed to the Board of Ms. Reiber and Ms. Granier's preliminary legal opinion provided to the Board, and their belief that the current landscape level planning efforts being undertaken by the BLM contravene the Planning 2.0 decision set by Congress. The Board was informed that several counties have already committed funds to support a legal memo drafting by Ms. Granier and Holland & Hart and that the current estimate to complete the necessary work is \$15,000. The Board was reminded that legal memo is only one component of the coordinated advocacy efforts on the subject, and that while staff has the authority to authorize funding of up to \$5,000 under the approved budget, Vinson prefers to have Board approval to maintain transparency. Vinson informed the Board that the request from staff is to approve the expenditure of funds not to exceed \$2,500 in support of the legal efforts. Commissioner Tipton expressed support, noting that this is an opportunity to be on offense instead of the defense. Commissioner Andriola noted that the issue is of great concern given the amount of land the agency controls, and Commissioner Herman discussed the parcels of land that Laura Granier was integral in saving for a school and cemetery in Washoe County. Commissioner Andriola requested clarification that while there is \$5,000 available in the budget the ask is for approval not to exceed \$2,500. Vinson informed the Board that the current cost estimate to produce the letter by Ms. Granier is \$15,000. Currently, with the amount of counties committed to supporting the financial needs the per participate cost is \$2,500 but if additional counties commit to support the cost for each would be reduced. Commissioner Andriola inquired as to if Washoe County could contribute to the efforts, and she was informed they could. NACO's financial support in the preparation of the letter by Ms. Granier, at a cost not to exceed \$2,500.00 was approved on a motion by Commissioner Tipton with second by President Elect Andreozzi.
- 12. Update from NACO Public Health Coordinator.** Amy informed the Board that the State will be opening their RFA process for the expenditure of Opioid dollars in May or June and encouraged those counties who have the required needs assessments completed to start planning for their asks of the state, be it dollars or expanded programing already being done. She also reminded the Board that the State is utilizing this RFA to plan for Biennium Fund for Resilient Nevada spending and that it could be the only open RFA process for two years, so it is important to identify needs and the necessary financial support now. Amy also strongly encouraged those counties who have not completed their Opioid needs assessments to complete them as soon as possible, as they are a requirement to access funding from the State, noting that Mercer will be available for technical support again in the fall, and NACO has materials available to assist in the assessment process as well. Vice President Gardner inquired as to if the funding is in addition to the settlements the individual counties will receive, and Amy clarified that the funding being discussed is from the State's portion of the settlements. President Elect Andreozzi noted challenges with available personnel to complete the assessments and asked whether the county specific settlement dollar expenditures must follow the State's plan. Amy clarified that the county dollars only must follow the individual settlement requirements, but there is significant overlap in the individual settlement requirements and the State's plan. Amy then reminded the Board of previous discussions regarding SB118 and directed their attention to a revised document provided by the State included in the agenda packet. She informed the Board that there was an update to the amounts previously provided and reminded the Board that any expenditure of \$100,000 or more must be approved by the Board of Examiners. She gave an

overview of how the funds are able to be used and informed the Board that any counties that want the State to use the funds in support of programing on their behalf would not need to enter into an interlocal agreement. She encouraged the counties to work with the State on their priorities by April 2nd for counties receiving over \$100,000 and by April 30th for counties receiving under \$100,000 in order to receive funds by July 1 when the funding becomes available. Amy also discussed planning efforts underway for future sustainability of the non-categorical public health fundings, including formula adjustments which would provide a base for each county and then a per capita addition. President Giomi noted that the key to future sustainability of SB118 is showing results to the State. President Elect Andreoizzi noted that developing programs with one-time funding will be a barrier and President Giomi noted that success could be shown with something as simple as utilizing the funds to create a needs assessment and action plan. Amy concluded the item by informing the Board that six counties had approved their Foundational Public Health Services assessments and gave an overview of the processes and timelines for those counties that have not completed the process. She noted that the necessary information for the remaining reports should be collected by June and the reports would be available for approval shortly thereafter, and reminded the Board that the reports will assist with guiding future decision making on public health infrastructure.

13. **Update from NACO Legislative Committee.** President Elect Andreoizzi, who chairs the Committee informed the Board that the Committee has resumed monthly meetings, and that the Legislature has begun interim committee meetings. He reminded the Board that the Association has 5 Bill Draft Requests available and encouraged all counties to participate on the Committee, noting that county staff, and Commissioners not on the NACO Board are welcome to join the Committee. He concluded the item by discussing the importance of the Committee and thanking Jennifer and Vinson for the excellent job they do in support of the legislative advocacy needs of the counties.

14. **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, who Chairs the Committee informed the Board that much of their discussion the previous day had been covered under previous agenda items. He noted that the Committee is continuing to work on improvements to Cooperating Agency engagement with the Bureau of Land Management. He also mentioned discussion of a currently open noncompetitive grant processes with the Department of Energy for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants. The Committee also discussed the BLM statewide Resource Management Plan project and the Governor's letter requesting acreage for affordable housing projects and funding for the Wild Horse and Burro program. Commissioner Reese discussed inconsistencies between state regulations against antler collection in mule deer winter ranges while still allowing off-road vehicle use in the same areas during the same time periods.
- b. **Approval of NACO Comment Letter on Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and Resource Management Plan Update (RMPA) Regarding Utility Scale Solar Energy Development to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).** Jacob drew the Board's attention to the draft letter included within the agenda packet. He noted that the letter had been workshopped during the Subcommittee meeting the previous day and that minor adjustments would be made to the draft presented. He informed the Board that the letter is due in mid-April and then gave an overview of the main points of the document. Specifically support for a Smart from the Start action alternative, focus on consistency with local

land use plans, disposal requirements at the end of life of panels, etc. Commissioner Strickland expressed support for the letter, stating that it was excellent. Commissioner Herman noted that solar fields cause issue with multiple other land uses and President Giomi expressed for support of only allowing solar development on lands without other identifiable uses. The submission of the comment letter was approved on a motion by Commissioner Herman with second by Commissioner Tipton.

15. **Updates from Members of the National Association of Counties Board.** In the absence of the NACo Board Directors, Vinson informed the Board that the Annual Conference will be held in July in Hillsborough County, Florida.
16. **Updates from Members of the Western Interstate Region (W.I.R.) Board.** Commissioner Tipton informed the Board that the Solar PEIS is an ongoing discussion of the Board, a new Legislative Director for W.I.R. is still being sought by NACo and that rural applicants able to work remotely are encouraged. He informed the Board that he would have additional updates in April following the monthly meeting being held later in the day.
17. **NACo Board Member Updates.** Members of the Board gave updates on activities within their counties.
18. **Public Comment.** Commissioner Herman discussed the upcoming recall of members of a Washoe County General Improvement District and the full status of BLM wild horse holding pens within Washoe County.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.