NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (NACO)

Board of Directors' Meeting
Tuesday, September 22, 2026
Immediately Following the Annual Business Meeting
Tahoe Blue Event Center
Azure Room
75 Hwy 50
Stateline, NV 89449

ADOPTED MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: President Gardner, President Elect Andriola, Vice President Keller, Carson City Supervisor Giomi, Clark County Commissioner Kirkpatrick, Douglas County Commissioner Tolbert, Esmeralda County Commissioner Perez, Humboldt County Commissioner Tipton, Lander County Commissioner Helming, Lincoln County Commissioner Reese, Pershing County Commissioner Crim, Storey County Commissioner Carmona, White Pine County Commissioner Carson, Fiscal Officer Kalt, and NACO Staff (Amy Hyne-Sutherland and Jennifer Berthiaume)

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. **Public Comment**. None was given.

2. **Approval of Agenda**. The agenda was approved on a motion by President Elect Andriola with second by Commissioner Kirkpatrick.

3. **Approval of Minutes of the August 28, 2026, NACO Board of Directors Meeting**. The minutes were approved as presented on a motion by Commissioner Kirkpatrick with second by Supervisor Giomi.

4. **Approval of NACO Staff Recommendations for NACO Participatory Democracy Awards and NACO Honor Roll Awardees**. Amy directed the Boards' attention to the award criteria included within the agenda packet. She explained that recommendations are sought fromboth Commissioners and County staff and informed the Board that staff recommends Elko County Commissioner Andreozzi receive the Participatory Democracy Award and that former NACO Executive Director Vinson Guthreau and former Churchill County Director of Social Services and current Executive Director of the Central Nevada Health District Shannon Ernst receive the Honor Roll. Supervisor Giomi noted that he did not remember previously announcing the awardees during the Board meeting. Amy stated that she did not believe it was previously done, but because the award states that it is approved by the Board on the date of the meeting she felt it necessary to bring the item. It was clarified that the awards are memorialized on plaques at the NACO office, and the Board was reminded that these awards had not been given in the last two years. Commissioner Kirkpatrick discussed the importance of the surprise of the awards to encourage conference participation and suggested that they are not announced prior tothe banquet, Amy stated that the verbiage could be changed on the awards and/or action could be taken after the fact to ratify the decisions. She also noted that efforts were made to keep **the awards** secret, but that Commissioner Andreozzi was aware because he was not able to attend the conference and Vinson was informed to encourage his attendance, but that Ms. Ernst did not know she **would be presented with an award**. It was also clarified for the Board that staff recommends the awardees based upon conversations with Commissioners and knowledge

of staff participation with NACO but that revisions to the process are welcome. Commissioner Kirkpatrick suggested having an item on the June Board of Directors agenda to remind the Board of the award and request recommendations to be submitted to staff in July. President Elect Andriola noted that it is helpful to solicit feedback and to define the award criteria a little more closely and specify that the awards are open to not only Commissioners but to county staff as well. The awardees were approved on a motion by President Elect Andriola with second by Commissioner Kirkpatrick.

5. **Discuss the creation of a NACO Finance Committee, including review of DRAFT Finance Committee guidance**. President Gardner reminded the Board of previous discussions on the creation of the Committee and encouraged the Board to review the draft document included in the agenda packet and to provide feedback to Amy for revisions and further discussion at the November Board of Directors meeting. Fiscal Officer Kalt encouraged the Board to consider participation and Commissioner Kirkpatrick noted that she sees difficulty with many of the finance committees she sits on having a quorum for meetings. Amy stated that the cadence and duration of meetings can be included in the formation of the Committee and within the Committee for communications upon formation. The item will be brought back to the Board for further discussion and possible action in November.

6. **Presentation from the Nevada Association of Conservation Districts (NvACD)**. President Gardner welcomed Kevin Piper, Executive Director of the Nevada Association of Conservation Districts who thanked the Board for the opportunity to address them and informed them that he was joined by Eureka County Natural Resources Director, Jake Tibbitts who also sits on several Boards that address natural resource conservation. Mr. Piper gave the Board an overview of the role of conservation districts (CDs) and why the county appointees are critical for proper resource management. He informed the Board that there are 28 statutory CDs in Nevada, noting that each is a separate political subdivision comprised of volunteer Supervisors tasked with acting as a bridge between landowners, communities, and agencies to ensure responsible resource management within the areas they serve. Mr. Piper stressed the importance of the county appointed Supervisors to ensure the CDs are fully functional and able to meet their requirements under statute. He provided the Board with an overview of CD operations and oversight under the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the partnerships that benefit counties and ensure county natural resource priorities are heard. Examples of CD-led projects beneficial to counties include post-fire, watershed, and riparian restoration and rangeland and weed management. It was explained that for every dollar of local investment five to 10 dollars is leveraged through other funding sources. Mr. Piper went over challenges CDs experience when a county appointment is not made and requested NACO support to encourage counties to make the crucial appointments and participation, support coordination efforts and to recognize CDs as important partners in natural resource management. Mr. Tibbits gave the Board a brief overview of the historical creation of CDs and noted that not all states have language within their statutes that ensure county participation in their governance. He gave examples of successful partnerships with counties including the provision of office space and administrative support, reduced duplication of conservation efforts, and the leveraging of county grant funding as grant matching dollars. Mr. Tibbits also noted that CDs have less operational constraints than counties for funding and project implementation. Commissioner Kirkpatrick recognized the long-time efforts of former State Legislator Pete Goicoechea to ensure a robust CD program across the State and noted that many Commissioners do not understand the mission and programing of CDs, noting that in southern Nevada the CDs have robust educational programs. Supervisor Giomi stated that it may be helpful to NvACD to directly reach out to the NACO Board representative for

counties who have not made their appointments and also stated that the leveraging of funding the CDs are capable of is not to be underestimated. Mr. Tibbits encouraged the Board to ensure that individual Commissioner assignments are made in January to stress that the CD appointments are not simply liaison appointments, but fully voting membership appointments. Commissioner Kirkpatrick suggested adding a component on CDs to the NACO portion of the New Legislator Training conducted by the LCB and Commissioner Reese informed the Board that Lincoln County has a standing quarterly agenda item for a report from their CD, which has been very helpful in educating not only the Commission but the public at large on the importance of CDs. He also informed the Board that CDs also work with Extension in collaborative educational efforts as an example of partnerships and avoidance of duplicative efforts.

7. **Update from Extension Director on Community Needs Survey Relaunch & County Engagement Plans**. Dr. Jacob DeDecker, Director of Extension thanked the Board for the creation of the NACO Subcommittee on Cooperative Extension, an idea that was born from discussion at the 2025 NACO Annual Conference. He noted the great meeting participation and the work that has come out of the Committee to strengthen Extension efforts and improve county partnerships, stating that counties have been one of Extension's partners for the past 110 years. Dr. DeDecker discussed the need to formalize efforts to determine the needs Extension can serve in our communities and the release of the Community Needs Surveys to the counties to gather the information. He informed the Board that there are surveys tailored to adults and youth and that they are available in Spanish as well. He requested that NACO as well as the individual county commissions share the surveys to gather the most responses possible to guide the future work and programing of Extension. Dr. DeDecker informed the Board that Extension staff in the counties had been reaching out to request help in disseminating the surveys throughout their communities. He discussed the closure of the surveys in late November and informed the Board that county level meetings would take place in late December and January to discuss the survey results, specifically what current programs are successful and what areas require new or more robust programing to best serve each community. President Gardner suggested that the meetings take place in January due to the fact that newly elected Commissioners would be coming on Board and they should be a part of those discussions. Dr. DeDecker then discussed the need to update the processes for communication in each county to ensure that communication plans are built around what works best for each community today, not what was effective ten years ago. Noting that communications should be exciting and effective to promote the best collaborative efforts between Extension and the counties. Commissioner Kirkpatrick informed the Board of the prizes that had been identified for the counties that receive the most survey results, including a paid registration for a NACo conference, a weekend package at Camp Alamo, as well as a package for attendance at the annual Extension Expo. She stressed that in a State with a population of over 2 million, several thousand people from Senior's to youth should be Extension champions. Commissioner Tolbert noted that he would like to see Commissioners attend the annual Expo, noting that it is easier to advocate for a program you have experienced. President Gardner closed the item by thanking Holly Gatske for her regular attendance and the monthly NACO Board of Directors meetings.

8. **Update from NACO's Government Affairs Manager**. Jennifer reminded the Board of President Elect Andriola's efforts to formalize NACO's Bill Draft Request (BDR) process and thanked her for the streamlined effort. She informed the Board that of the five NACO BDRs submitted to the Legislative Council Bureau (LCB); two drafts had been received. She explained that on the initiative to remove the sunset of taxes associated with Open Space Initiatives, LCB had identified two additional statutes that should be included, NRS 050 and

070 which can be used singularly or in conjunction to provide funding for Open Space Initiatives, noting that the final language of the NACO BDR will include all three statutes. Supervisor Giomi requested clarification that LCB did not say removing the sunset is unnecessary due to the other statues, but that the sunset should be removed from all three; Jennifer confirmed that was correct. She also informed the Board that draft language had also been received on theMedicaid pharmacy rebate BDRand that staff continues to work with LCB on that bill language. Jennifer concluded her remarks by encouraging attendance at the educational panel regarding successful policy coordination to be held the following day and thanked Amy for her guidance and leadership in the transition year. Amy then discussed the Executive Order from Governor Lombardo that had been executed the previous Friday and informed the Board that Isabell Graff from the Governor's Office would be participating in the policy panel, and she had been informed questions regarding the Order were likely. Amy then discussed the fact that the Order did not exclude abatements to county revenues, which remains a concern and informed the Board that a meeting was scheduled for the next Monday with the Governor's Office. Commissioner Kirkpatrick informed the Board that she was a co-sponsor of the original legislation regarding data centers and that it is necessary for abatements to be reconsidered every ten years.

Updates from National Standing Committees:

9. **Updates from Members of the National Association of Counties Board, including the Rural Action Caucus (RAC) and the Midsize County Caucus (MCC)**. Commissioner Kirkpatrick announced that Clark County will hosthe t NACo Executive staff and elected officials to provide education on the issues and landscape of the West in October. She explained that roughly 30 people will attend the tour which includes five States and discussed the challenges associated with some of the federal rules surrounding such a tour. She also suggested including a tour of similar nature in the programing for the WIR conference. President Gardner reminded the Board that Nevada and Douglas County will be hosting the WIR Annual Conference in May of 2027 and informed the Board that NACo staff was currently in the area conducting site visitations for the event. Vice President Keller informed the Board that the RAC continued to develop their meeting calendar and that Commissioner Hendrix was in Texas to attend the RAC energy symposium that would begin the following day. President Elect Andriola informed the Board that MCC is also continuing to develop their calendar, and a leadership meeting had been held to discuss the topics of importance to counties that the Caucus would address.

10. **Updates from Members of the Western Interstate Region Board**. Commissioner Tipton informed the Board that the WIR fall meeting would take place the following week and although he was unsure if he would be attending, Commissioner Steninger would be attending in person.

11. **Updates from Member Counties**. Board members gave updates on activities within their respective counties.

12. **Public Comment**. Commissioner Reese thanked Douglas County and NACO staff for conducting the Annual Conference. President Gardner acknowledged Rachael Evanson for her work on the conference logo and the challenge coin given to attendees.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.