



WashoeLife

[HOME](#)

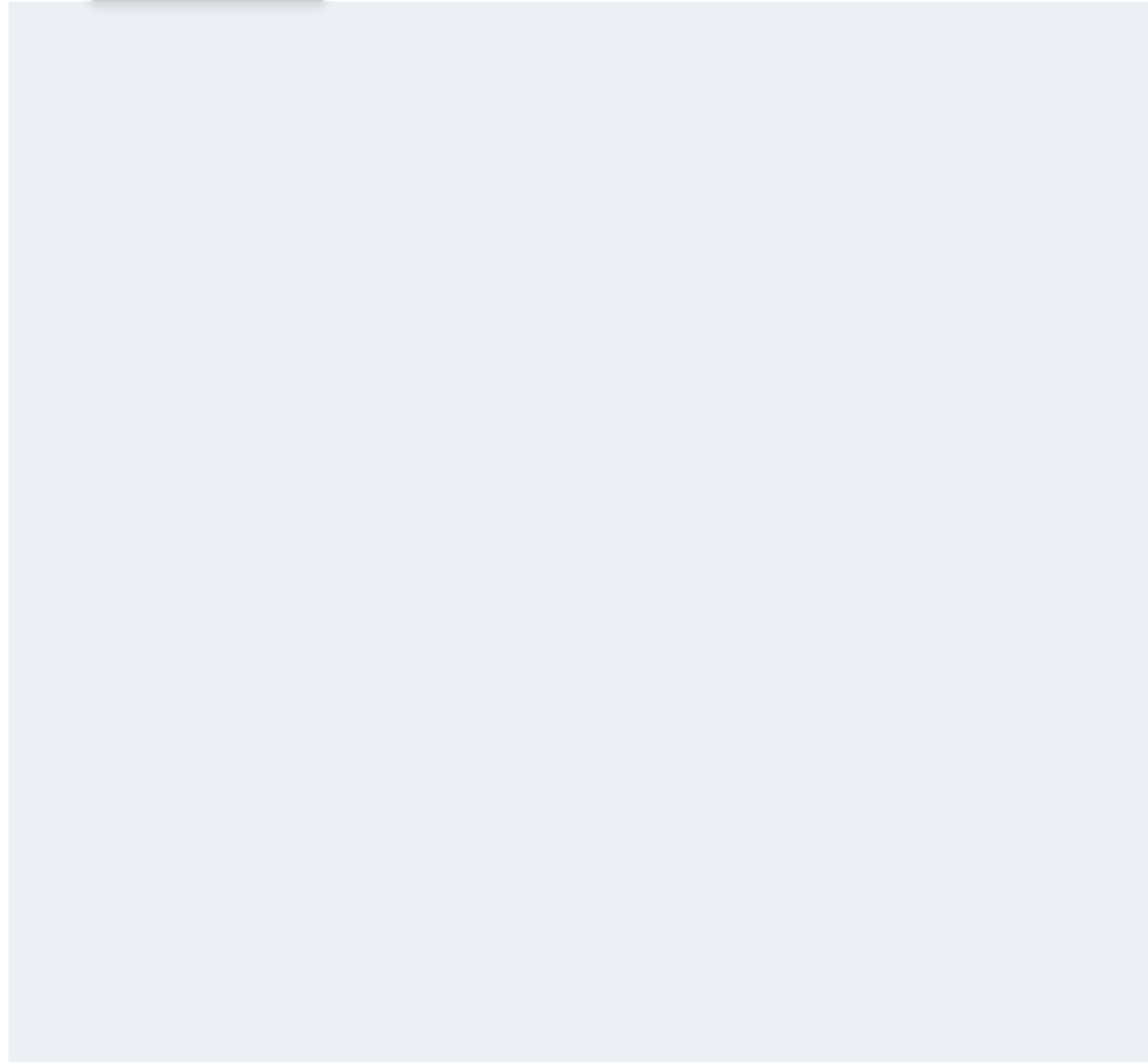
[WASHOE COUNTY](#) ▾

[NEWSLETTERS](#)

[MEDIA](#) ▾

[SIGN UP](#)

English ▾



This press release has been archived. If an accessible version is needed, please contact communications@washoecounty.org.

TOP HEADLINES FROM THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

by [Bethany Drysdale](#) | May 11, 2021



The following are highlights from today's Washoe County Board of County Commissioners meeting:

1. Commissioners reviewed proposed FY22 budget: Assistant County Manager Christine Vuletich and Budget Manager Lori Cooke presented the [Washoe County FY22 County Manager's Recommended Budget](#) for feedback and direction. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in early 2020, Washoe County prepared for severe financial impacts. With some careful cost-containment strategies and better-than-expected revenues, the impact was not as great as anticipated, and Washoe County is positioned to start the 2022 fiscal year in a stable financial position. This will enable the county to expand library hours and regional homelessness services. A newly established Homelessness Fund will support a variety of programs from the

Sheriff's Homelessness Initiative to the shelter and safe camp program at the Nevada Cares Campus, as well as the continuation of Crossroads, Our Place, and other programs.

The total recommended Fiscal Year 2022 budget appropriations are \$829 million, and of that, the General Fund appropriations total \$435 million, or 53 percent.

The Fiscal Year 2022 recommended budget reflects strategic priorities for the county, including:

- Continuum of care for unsheltered and vulnerable populations
- Funding for property tax settlement payments
- Funding for expansion of Regional Homelessness Services
- Funding for expansion of library hours
- Restoration of General Fund support for capital projects
- Replenishment of Stabilization and Risk Management Reserves

Staff will incorporate feedback from the commissioners and return with the Final Budget for adoption at a public hearing on May 18. Staff is also monitoring the 2021 Nevada Legislative Session and budget, which is scheduled to end on May 31 and could have impacts on local budgets.

"I'd like to see the parks' budgets. I've heard it for seven years now how parks have been decimated, and it's true. It's a tired rhetoric," Commission Chair Bob Lucey said. "Our parks have zero revenue and provide such a valuable service to our community. These parks are huge assets to the county and we're not doing justice to these parks. Let's change the narrative and give back to the community. Let's find a way to identify funding for parks. To keep these parks at a status quo, we're doing an injustice not only to ourselves but also to the community."

2. Commissioners approved amendment to local authority of COVID measures: Washoe County assumed local authority over COVID-19 mitigation measures from the State of Nevada earlier this month. The authority allows them to amend the [plan](#) as needed before Gov. Sisolak lifts all emergency directives on June 1, with the exception of the statewide mask mandate. Nightclubs, day clubs, and adult entertainment venues were previously slated to reopen June 1, but Commissioners today approved an amendment to the mitigation plan to allow them to open. This will bring these businesses in line with other business types in the county, effective at 11:59 p.m. today.

3. Commissioners advanced Washoe County's Safe Camp Pilot Project at the Nevada Cares

Campus: In two actions today, Commissioners approved an [operator contract](#) for the county's new Safe Camp Pilot Project and approved the [submission of a grant](#) to pay to launch the program.

Washoe County will work with the Karma Box Project to staff and operate a Safe Camp program at the Nevada Cares Campus until a formal procurement for services can take place. The agreement for just over \$102,000 will cover an initial three-month term and \$34,000 per month for subsequent months. The Nevada Cares Campus is slated to open next week, and will assist the public health and safety concerns for unsheltered people living in encampments along the Truckee River, and will enable the county to provide a safe camping location alongside services, which will be offered at the Nevada Cares Campus.

"The reason we're doing this pilot is to verify that the safe camp concept is a viable alternative to a shelter, which is the other option we will be making available in the next few weeks," County Manager Eric Brown said. "We want to know, can we achieve the same outcomes in terms of successfully transitioning them to stable housing."

Additionally, Commissioners approved a grant submission to the Nevada Non-Entitlement Community Development Block Grant Program to fund the Safe Camp Pilot Program. The funds are to be used specifically for the prevention of, preparation for, and response to the Coronavirus.

The safe camp model will ensure that people experiencing homelessness have a safe, low barrier option to begin the process of transitioning into housing. The safe camp staff will be trained to continually focus participant outreach on finding permanent housing. As more people are supported to successfully exit the camp into their own permanent housing solutions, we hope to further reduce the spread of the virus throughout the community.

Nevada received approximately \$9.9 million from this block grant program, \$244,000 of which is allocated to Washoe County for COVID-19 mitigation measures for unsheltered residents.

4. Reno-Tahoe International Airport CEO presented update on current business operations: The Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority operates two airports in the region. The Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RTO) moved more than 4.5 million passengers on 10 airlines in 2019, according to an [update](#) provided to the Commission by RTIA CEO Daren Griffin, who took the helm of the airport authority in August 2020. He reported on the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as travel came to a standstill for much of the year. However, the airport is positioned to rebound with more nonstop destinations now than in 2019, and by July of this year it will have the highest ever nonstop destinations at 25.

The airport authority's second airport, Reno Stead Airport, will undergo improvements in the coming year and will be seeking proposals to develop 30 acres of available land for hangar/aeronautical development.

"It looks like there are some amazing things going on at the airport," Chair Bob Lucey said. "Thank you for presenting to the Board today, and welcome to Reno. We really appreciate you and all that you are doing at the airport."

5. Commissioners received update on traffic signal timing from RTC: The Regional Transportation Commission conducts an evaluation and timing review of all 410 traffic signals in Washoe County every three years. RTC's [signal timing program](#) began in 2005. Traffic signal timing is an important tool to reduce pollution and fuel waste from vehicles slowing down and idling unnecessarily. Well-timed intersections also promote safety as they keep traffic flowing and help get drivers where they need to go faster. The signals have also been timed for proper pedestrian crossing time as well as vehicular crossing time. RTC has a traffic-signal hotline to report poor signal timing or other traffic-related issues: 775-335-ROAD (7623).

6. Commissioners approved board appointments:

- [Clay Thomas](#), Washoe County Board of Adjustment, District 3
- [Ken Krater](#), Planning Commission
- [Adam Kramer](#), Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority

###



Bethany Drysdale

Communications Manager

775-313-8582

bdrysdale@washoecounty.gov

Copyright [WashoeLife](#)

[Terms of Use](#)