



# REGIONAL PLANNING GOVERNING BOARD

**MEMBERS**  
Bonnie Weber, Chair  
Mike Carrigan, Vice-Chair  
David Aiazzi  
Dwight Dortch  
Jim Galloway  
Toni Harsh  
Pierre Hascheff  
Geno Martini  
Ron Schmitt  
Jim Shaw  
Dave Ziegler, Director

## MINUTES

### REGIONAL PLANNING GOVERNING BOARD

#### Regular Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2004

The Regional Planning Governing Board (RPGB) met in regular session in the Washoe County Commission Chambers, 1001 E. Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada, and conducted the following business:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bonnie Weber at 2:05 p.m.

#### 1. ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll, and Regional Planning Governing Board Members in attendance were: Bonnie Weber, Dave Aiazzi, Dwight Dortch, Jim Galloway, Toni Harsh, and Geno Martini. Members absent were: Mike Carrigan, Pierre Hascheff, Ron Schmitt, and Jim Shaw.

Also present were: Dave Ziegler, TMRPA Director; Norman Azevedo, Legal Counsel; Randy Baxley, TMRPA; Rosanna Coombes, TMRPA; Patricia Rogers, TMRPA; and Mary Kuechler, TMRPA.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Harsh stated that she will be leaving at 3:00 p.m. and requested that agenda item 6 be taken out of order.

MEMBER AIAZZI MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MARCH 11, 2004, REGULAR MEETING AGENDA AS AMENDED, SECONDED BY MEMBER MARTINI.

Chair Weber asked the Regional Planning Director if this meets with everyone's approval. Mr. Ziegler responded that it would be fine to move the budget item up. It might also be a good idea to do the HOME Consortium agenda item first.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SIX (6) MEMBERS PRESENT.

#### 3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Member Aiazzi led the salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

#### **5. BUSINESS OF THE DAY**

A. Consideration and possible approval of the recommendations of the Washoe County HOME Consortium's Technical Review Committee for:

- 1) Allocation of \$86,791 for operating expenses for the Community Housing Development Corporations recommended for certification or recertification; and
- 2) Allocation of FY 2004-2005 Affordable Housing Municipal Loan Program funds in the amount of \$2,875,207 for the development of affordable housing projects.

MEMBER AIAZZI MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WASHOE COUNTY HOME CONSORTIUM'S TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE, SECONDED BY MEMBER DORTCH.

Chair Weber stated that she will support the motion with the exception of the new opportunities for home ownership in the amount of \$377,000.

MEMBER AIAZZI AMENDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THAT AS A SEPARATE MOTION, SECOND CONCURRED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SIX (6) MEMBERS PRESENT.

MEMBER AIAZZI MADE A MOTION TO SUPPORT THE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOME OWNERSHIP IN THE AMOUNT OF \$377,000, SECONDED BY MEMBER DORTCH.

Member Galloway asked if there was someone that could answer a question on the item of new opportunities.

Hilary Lopez, City of Reno, and Michelle McKee, with City of Reno, stated their names for the record.

Member Galloway asked what would happen with capital gains made possible by the assistance given to a family in order to buy a home. Michelle McKee responded that the way the program is structured, only the amount that was invested in the purchase of the home is collected. If there is a price appreciation, the homeowner would realize that.

Member Galloway stated that it seems to be a weak point in the program. People may perceive that as public money being used for other people to make an actual profit. Member Galloway stated that a lot of that could be inflation and that he will support the motion.

Member Harsh asked if there is an opportunity to look at this in any other manner regarding the issues that have been discussed. Michelle McKee responded that the opportunity is there. Washoe Count requested that we meet with them to go over the program and generate suggestions from the RPGB and brainstorm how we might change the program in the future.

Chair Weber stated that she will vote against the motion and expressed concern with helping families to get into homes when there are other avenues to help those families.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR AND ONE (1) OPPOSITION BY MEMBER WEBER.

- B. Consideration and possible adoption of RPGB resolution 04-02, adopting amendments to the 2002 Regional Plan, consisting of policy and map amendments related to resort service areas [Consideration continued from February 12, 2004].

Rosanna Coombes, Long-Range and Community Relations Planner stated that additional information has been received from Washoe County on this item. Regional Planning staff believes this information should be taken back to the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) for further consideration before being brought back to the RPGB.

MEMBER MARTINI MADE A MOTION TO REFER THIS ITEM BACK TO THE RPC, AS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF, SECONDED BY MEMBER HARSH. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SIX (6) MEMBERS PRESENT.

- C. Status report and possible direction to staff on pending Regional Plan amendment to incorporate by reference the Regional Utility Corridor Report (RUCR) as amended, pursuant to Regional Plan policy 3.2.3.

Mr. Ziegler stated that the RPC voted last night to recommend to the RPGB that the RUCR, as amended, be incorporated into the Regional Plan by reference. This was not put on the agenda today for action in order to provide time for the RPGB members to be oriented on this item.

Member Galloway stated that he was told that the RUCR was incorporated when the plan update was done. Mr. Ziegler responded that policy 3.2.3 of the Regional Plan says that the RPC will review the RUCR for conformance with the Regional Plan and upon a finding of conformance, it will be incorporated into the Regional Plan by reference. Regional Planning staff recommended that this be a two-step process because while the RPC has jurisdiction over the conformance reviews, Regional Plan amendments have to come to the RPGB and they have different noticing requirements.

Member Galloway asked if this was the same report that was worked on two years prior to the plan update. Mr. Ziegler responded that it is the same report. The RUCR has been updated and reformatted. The principles and design and engineering standards are the same as they were in 1999.

- D. Discussion and possible direction to staff on legislative report.

Patricia Rogers, Community Outreach Assistant, stated that there has been some feedback from local governments and affected entities regarding the legislative MOU. Ms. Rogers reported that it has been suggested that an amendment be included that would require the parties to an MOU to meet prior to the legislative session to discuss the BDR's.

Chair Weber asked if this item could be continued to the next RPGB meeting when all of the membership is in attendance.

MEMBER MARTINI MADE A MOTION TO CONTINUE THIS ITEM TO THE NEXT RPGB MEETING, SECONDED BY MEMBER AIAZZI. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SIX (6) MEMBERS PRESENT.

## **6. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

A. Consideration and possible action on FY 04-05 budget and work program, including:

- 1) Status report from Board of Washoe County Commissioners regarding outstanding receivable from FY 02-03.
- 2) Legislative representation budget.
- 3) FY 04-05 budget, adoption of recommendations to local governing bodies.

Mr. Ziegler stated that at the request of this board, the proposed budget shows no increase in revenues in the contribution of the local governments from the 2003-2004 cycle. The reason we are able to absorb cost increases without increasing the share of the contributions from the local governments is because we have been able to save some money over the last fiscal year and this fiscal year and we can draw on those savings. The proposed budget will not be a balanced budget in 04-05 but it would not raise the contributions of the local governments and would leave us with an ending fund balance of about six percent.

The proposed budget does not include any professional services for a legislative contract lobbyist. The assumption is that Regional Planning staff will take on the legislative affairs functions and handle the liaison with the legislature during the 2005 session. In discussions with local government staff about this, one concern expressed if Regional Planning staff would be able to handle the workload. A half-time temporary position in Ms. Coombes team has been budgeted to bolster staff resources. If there is a desire to use a contract lobbyist, the half-time person would be dropped and there would need to be an increase in revenues by about \$25,000 in order to cover the costs of a lobbyist.

Mr. Ziegler reported that the Board of Washoe County Commissioners considered the matter of the unpaid \$22,500 invoice from FY 2002-2003 for lobbying expenses in the 2003 session. The decision of the Board of Washoe County Commissioners was to stand by their previous position and not pay that invoice on the grounds that it was not a necessary expense and that the Regional Planning Agency (RPA) has adequate internal resources to handle legislative affairs. Mr. Ziegler stated that it would be possible to act on the 2004-2005 budget and not deal with the issue of the unpaid invoice.

Chair Weber suggested addressing the unpaid invoice issue separately.

Member Harsh stated that the legislative affairs can be handled in-house very well. A lobbyist would simply educate the legislature on the facts of regional issues. Nobody knows those facts better than Regional Planning staff. Member Harsh suggested that the County might have some comfort level with paying the \$22,500 invoice since the legislative affairs would be pulled back in-house, which would be a significant savings.

Member Aiazzi stated that the past is a legal issue, not a budget issue.

Member Dortch asked what the budget was last year for the lobbyist. Mary Kuechler, Administrative Services Manager, stated that \$60,000 was budgeted and \$55,000 was spent.

Member Dortch asked what the City of Reno and the City of Sparks share was of that expense. Mr. Ziegler stated that the amount that was budgeted broke down to \$22,500 for Washoe County, \$22,500 for Sparks and four thirds of that for Reno based on the 30/30/40 ratio.

Member Aiazzi stated that thirty percent of \$55,000 would be \$16,500. Mr. Ziegler stated that the consultant did not invoice the RPA for the full amount that was budgeted.

Member Dortch stated that if the City of Sparks and the City of Reno were reimbursed for the lobbyist, it would take \$57,500 out of last year's ending fund balance of \$103,000. The beginning fund balance would then be \$57,500 lower. The contributions for the three entities could be increased for this year to get the RPA back up to the six percent ending fund balance in the proposed budget.

Member Galloway stated that separating the issues would be best. The proposal to adjust the budget effectively takes Washoe County money to pay for the lobbyist. It would in fact constitute fully assessing the County for the lobbyist. The position taken by the County Commission was consistent with its past position regarding what is and is not necessary to the function of this agency. If we proceed with the budget that does not include a lobbyist and we have assurance that this agency is not going to employ other people than staff to represent it, then the outstanding claim could be handled as some kind of settlement. Member Galloway stated that taking it back as a settlement situation is different than taking it back as a policy question for the Board of County Commissioners. Member Galloway would support taking it back for consideration if there is some assurance that this agency will not hire a lobbyist.

Chair Weber stated that this should be addressed as two separate issues. Washoe County was in favor with what was originally in the 2002-2003 budget and did not feel that it was a necessary part of the functioning of the RPA to hire a lobbyist. Chair Weber stated that Washoe County should be responsible in some way for the invoice and is willing to take it back to the Board of County Commissioners to discuss.

Member Dortch stated that if an outside legislative lobbyist was not a necessary expense for Washoe County, then it should not be a necessary expense for the City of Reno and the City of Sparks so they should be refunded that money. This board authorized the RPA to hire a lobbyist. It is up to this board to find the money to cover the expense for that lobbyist. If it was not a necessary expense, then refund the money to Reno and Sparks and deal with how to get this budget back to the six percent ending fund balance.

Chair Weber stated that, at the time, the RPGB members from the City of Reno and the City of Sparks felt comfortable with supporting the lobbyist and voted in favor of it. At that time, the Washoe County Commissioners did not feel comfortable with that.

Member Dortch responded that it is not the County's position to tell the RPGB how to run. If this board hires an Executive Director, it is our job to find out how we are going to pay for that Executive Director so we put it in the budget. If we decide to give the Director a raise that is not within the budget, we have to find a way to do it. As a board we authorized a contract for a lobbyist for \$80,000.

It is our job to pay that bill. If it is not a necessary expense for the County, then it should not be a necessary expense for the City of Reno and the City of Sparks.

Member Aiazzi suggested talking about these issues as a whole and then taking separate motions. Member Aiazzi agreed with Member Galloway's position in that as a tax payer he feels that it is not right for any entity to go outside of its own staff. Member Aiazzi stated that he could go forward with the settlement agreement if the Board of County Commissioners would agree that they would also not go outside to hire a lobbyist and live by the rules they want to give to the RPGB. Member Aiazzi pointed out that when this board voted on hiring a lobbyist, the County Commissioners on this board did not unanimously oppose that position. It was not a united front. Member Aiazzi also stated that the City of Reno and the City of Sparks offered to help the County fund one of their lobbyists so that that lobbyist would work for all of us at once and we were told no.

Member Martini stated that it is wrong for the County to think they can dictate what the RPGB can do. The RPGB voted to have a lobbyist and the invoice should be paid.

Member Galloway stated that two of the County Commissioners on this board voted not to hire a lobbyist. One County Commissioner did vote to hire a lobbyist but there definitely was objection to doing it. The issue is not whether or not Washoe County can tell this board what to do. The issue is what Washoe County is obliged to pay for. Member Galloway stated that Washoe County is obliged to pay for things that are necessary to the function of this agency for regional planning. Member Galloway stated that it is not necessary for local governments to have lobbyists. This board by its nature would only be coming forth when it is divided. Where we agree, we can do it without this board having a lobbyist and where we do not agree the fact is that it always needs to be disclosed that there is not agreement among the local governments. The legislature would have to take that into account anyway. Member Galloway suggested that we move on and in the event that this board does send a message to say it does not intend to hire a lobbyist for this session, the matter of the past bill can be treated as a settlement in which nobody admits an obligation to pay but the matter is just settled.

Member Martini stated that the RPGB spent a lot a money on the Verdi annexation. It was not necessary to the City of Sparks to pay for anything that had to do with that annexation. Why should the taxpayers of the City of Sparks have paid for that. It is wrong not to pay what you owe.

Member Aiazzi stated that as a citizen of Washoe County, if he came to his County Commissioners and said he doesn't think what they are doing is correct, they would not allow him to withhold that part of his property taxes. The County Commission has elected people from their own to be on this board. Those people presented the county's position at that time that a lobbyist was not needed and they lost. Eighty percent of the people elected to the RPGB voted yes. Member Aiazzi stated that by saying not only do we want a super-majority but we want an absolute unanimous vote on everything that happens at RPGB, it shows that someone wants to control something. We have to have someone that represents the RPGB to protect regional planning. Whether we send our staff or hire an outside person, it still costs money.

Member Harsh stated that what is before us right now is the budget. What is also before us is the issue of an unpaid bill. That needs to be settled. Member Harsh suggested giving the opportunity for Washoe County to settle their bill.

MEMBER HARSH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AS DRAFTED, SECONDED BY MEMBER GALLOWAY.

Member Dortch stated that he will not support the motion because the amount of money we would allocate for a lobbyist should be put in the budget to avoid any possible fight in the future over who should pay for it. Member Dortch stated that if the County does not pay this bill, the City of Reno and the City of Sparks need to be refunded for what they paid for the lobbyist last year.

Member Martini stated that he will not support the motion.

Member Aiazzi stated that he will support the budget so that he can vote for reconsideration at the next meeting. Member Dortch stated that if it goes as it sits right now, it will not pass and we will hear it next month anyway.

THE MOTION FAILED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR AND THREE (3) OPPOSITIONS BY MEMBERS AIAZZI, DORTCH, AND MARTINI.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Weber adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m. due to the lack of a quorum.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Birmingham

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David S. Ziegler, Director  
Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency

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Bonnie Weber, Chair  
Regional Planning Governing Board

**APPROVED BY THE REGIONAL PLANNING GOVERNING BOARD IN SESSION ON \_\_\_\_\_, 2004**