



Washoe County, Nevada

**Many Communities.
One County.**

Board: Sun Valley CAB

Date: February 2010

From: Lorrie Adams, phone: 328-2720 and email: ladams@washoecounty.us

Truckee Meadows Regional Planning:

The Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency is holding a series of four workshops to receive input on the draft regional utility corridor policy recommendations. The recommendations address four areas: policies regarding existing regional utility corridors; policies regarding future regional utility corridors; policies and/or maps to address the siting of transmission lines originating from alternative energy sources and policies to address undergrounding of transmission lines. Dates, times and locations:

Wednesday, February 3: 6pm at the Spanish Springs Library, Shoshone Room, located at 7100A Pyramid Lake Highway, Sparks

Tuesday, February 9: 6pm at the City of Reno Council Chambers, located at One East First Street, Reno

Wednesday, February 24: 6pm at the South Valleys Library, Olympic Village Room, located at 15650A Wedge Parkway, Reno

Tuesday, March 2: 6pm at the North Valleys High School Cafeteria, located at 1470 East Golden Valley Road, Reno

To access the current RUCR, visit: <http://tmrpa.org/uploads/misc/1037857907-09-06-11%20RUCR%20%28Map%20Version%204%29.pdf>

Community Development:

Nuisance Code: The Nuisance Code was adopted by the County Commission on January 12, 2010 and goes into effect on January 22, 2010. The Code compiles nuisance-type regulations from throughout County Code into a single section within WCC Chapter 50. The Code can be enforced either criminally, or through the newly adopted administrative enforcement process. Agencies responsible for compliance or coordinating compliance as a lead agency include: Building and Safety, Health, Sheriff, Public Works (Animal Services, Engineering and Roads), Sierra Fire, Truckee Meadows Fire, Regional Parks and Open Space and Water Resources. Work continues on the administrative enforcement process, specifically on creating a list of hearing officers and adding the process as one of the

enforcement tools to all County Code chapters. Agencies will have to decide if they will enforce the Nuisance Code administrative process or enforce existing County regulations through the criminal process when evaluating code violations over the next several months. To view the newly adopted code, visit: www.washoecounty.us/nuisances

Engaged Leadership: What are you passionate about in your community? Identify your passion and learn valuable skills for turning your passion into action. The Engaged Leadership course is a custom designed five session training and support program for citizen volunteers or members of Washoe County's Boards, Commissions or Committees. The leadership program will provide students with relevant, practical information and personal coaching. Participants can expect lively group discussion and interactive learning exercises. Session topics include: understanding leadership characteristics; community visioning and action planning; working with the public and government; group facilitation and decision making; board ethics and Nevada's Open Meeting Law and managing conflict and dealing with difficult people. Course materials are provided; participants are encouraged to bring their own snacks and drinks. Sessions run for five weeks on Thursday evenings from 6 to 8pm, from March 4 to April 1, 2010. For more information, contact Sheri Ingley at 328-3612 or email: singley@washoecounty.us

Washoe County Commission:

Budget Update: On January 26, 2010, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) was told that the 2010-11 fiscal year budget, which begins on July 1, 2010, will need to be reduced by \$25 million, representing an overall 9% cut. Over the last three and a half years in response to declining revenues, the County has made more than \$100 million in spending cuts. Specifically, property tax and sales tax revenues which the County relies upon for about 80% of its total operating funds have seen unprecedented, double-digit declines over the past couple years. Staffing levels are currently where they were 10 years ago with 500 positions defunded through vacancy freezes, layoffs and separation incentives. Washoe County now has fewer than 6 employees for every one thousand citizens we serve—one of the lowest staffing rates in the United States for a county our size. Additionally, action taken by the Nevada State Legislature in 2009 redirected \$25 million of County revenues to the state over the biennium.

Staff reported to the Board today that revenue growth will continue to decline next year with property taxes down nearly 7% and sales (consolidated) taxes down 2%. It was noted that the economy has rebased and past growth trends are not likely to be repeated, therefore, rebasing the County's cost structure is necessary. While further cuts to the current 2009-10 fiscal budget are not anticipated due to the deep cuts already experienced, it is necessary to further reduce the county's budget by \$25 million (or 9%) for the coming fiscal year. While recommendations focused on meeting the 2010-11 budget deficit, data presented showed the deficit is structural meaning that on-going expenditures will exceed on-going revenues for the long-term unless sustainable changes are made.

The Board had previously directed staff to eliminate deficits and make County government financially sustainable over the long term, utilizing three prioritized goals: 1) maintain service levels, 2) maximize employment, and 3) achieve sustainable labor costs. The Board

had asked for a balanced approach to achieving financial sustainability, and today staff presented a 3-point strategy for their consideration.

3-Point Balanced Plan Recommendation to meet \$25 million deficit for 2010-11: 1. Achieve Sustainable Labor Costs. While employees have foregone contracted cost of living increases over the past two years, and the majority of County employees took a 2.5% wage reduction from February through December 2009 with many others voluntarily extending those reductions, it was noted that current wage and benefit costs cannot be sustained given the new level of revenues projected over the next five years. It is recommended that \$11.4 million of long-term changes to wages and benefits be sought since labor comprises about 75% of the County's total expenses (common for service oriented organizations).

2. Continue Prioritized Budget Reductions. Once again, departments are being asked to reduce their annual operating budgets. For this fiscal year, they are asked to reduce budgets by an average of 3% to be achieved through efficiencies, consolidations, outsourcing and the like to reach \$7.8 million worth of cuts. Proposed reductions by categories are: Public Safety – 2%; Judicial/Health/Social Services – 3%; General Government – 4%; Culture and Recreation – 5%.

3. Redirect Revenues and Reserves. Staff recommends that \$5.75 million worth of reserves (savings) and re-allocating Board-restricted revenues be used to help meet the \$25 million deficit, noting that use of these funds needs to be measured and methodical.

The BCC directed staff to develop a budget for next fiscal year based on the recommendations presented and to bring back future projections based on assuming no growth in revenues for at least the next five years. As the budget develops, the BCC will hear updates as well as presentations by department and elected officials with their reduction strategies. The public is invited to participate in this process, with opportunities to do so available on our website at Washoe County A final, balanced budget must be submitted to the State of Nevada by June 1st.

Ruby Natural Gas Pipeline: On January 26th, County Commissioners approved the Vya temporary work camp that will be used to mobilize workers to construct the Ruby natural gas pipeline through northern Washoe County. This construction project may employ upwards of 300 workers from the local labor pool (out of a total of up to 600) and the work camp will serve as their living facility for 8 to 12 months. The application for the pipeline will be processed next and is tentatively scheduled for hearing at the March 2nd meeting of the Washoe County Planning Commission.

Reno City Council:

Council Seeks to Balance FY 2010-2011 Budget: On January 8, 2010 Reno City Council approved a reduction in force to help balance the fiscal year 2009-2010 budget, totaling 66 positions that helped to offset the worsening revenue picture for the upcoming fiscal year as well. After factoring in those savings, the deficit is projected to be \$15.2 million next year. After listening to public comment and hearing the presentation by City staff, Council adopted staff recommendations of one-time reductions totaling \$4.55 million in savings. Additionally, Council gave direction to the City Manager to return to the employee bargaining units to

discuss employee concessions to cover the remaining deficit, to avoid further reductions in force. Council expressed hope that future layoffs would be made unnecessary by working with employee groups to find ways to offset approximately 8% of the projected salaries and benefits for next year. A resolution to begin planning a reduction in force for 2010-2011 was continued to either the February 24th Council meeting or a special meeting yet to be scheduled. For more information, visit: www.reno.gov

Regional Transmission Commission:

Moana Lane Widening Project Public Input: On January 14, the RTC hosted an open house community meeting to introduce the preliminary design concepts for the Moana Lane Widening Project, an RTC-5 accelerated project. The project proposes widening of Moana Lane from Virginia Street to the Interstate-580 (U.S. 395) ramps from four lanes to six lanes. In 2003, a corridor study completed by Stantec, a local engineering and design firm, confirmed the need for the widening, as well as major improvements to the Moana/Virginia and Moana/Kietzke intersections. The purpose of this project is to reduce existing congestion, increase safety, and provide future capacity for this important commuter and resort corridor. The project's design is currently 30% complete. To learn more about this project, contact RTC Project Manager David Logan at 332-9509 or email: dlogan@rtcwashoe.com

NDOT & RTC Partner on Two Regional Road Projects: The Nevada Department of Transportation, in partnership with the RTC, will begin construction on two major road projects, the Northbound U.S. 395 Improvement Project (from Moana Lane to Interstate-80) and the Meadowood Interchange Improvement Project. These projects are partially funded with RTC-5 revenues. The project includes widening the existing freeway in the northbound direction (only) to accommodate auxiliary lanes to improve freeway ramp movements between Moana Lane and I-80. Additional improvements include: modifying interchange ramps; installing new retaining walls; widening bridge structures crossing over surface streets, the Truckee River, and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks; as well as landscaping and aesthetics. The community investment for this project is \$31.5 million (RTC-5 contribution at \$20 million). Initial project costs were previously estimated at \$70 and \$85 million, but bids for this project were submitted much lower than original construction cost estimates. Construction is scheduled to begin in February and will take two years to complete. Approximately 900 local jobs will be created. To learn more about this project visit NDOT's website at www.nevadadot.com click on Major Road Projects. The Meadowood Interchange Project, a cooperative effort between NDOT and RTC, advertised for bids on January 21. Bids will be opened on March 4. This project will add another estimated \$42 to \$45 million in construction work (RTC-5 contribution at \$26 million) and also create additional jobs for northern Nevadans. Construction is expected to begin in May 2010 and take approximately two years to complete.

Allocation of Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds for Roads: RTC is in the process of preparing the second bond sale for RTC-5 funding. This next bond sale for roads, totaling approximately \$90 million, will have three components of bonds: Tax Exempt, Build America Bonds (includes a 35% federal interest subsidy), and Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds (RZED). The RZED bonds in the amount of \$10 million were provided to the RTC from the Washoe County allocation. The interest for these taxable bonds is subsidized by the

federal government at 45%. Since the interest on these bonds is taxable, the interest rates are higher than tax-exempt bonds, but with the high percentage of federal interest subsidy, the net cost to the RTC will be lower than tax-exempt bonds and they will provide an efficient cost of borrowing. The bonds are scheduled to close on March 17, 2010, pending Washoe County Commission approval. For more information about the upcoming bond sale, contact Tom Taelour at 335-1832 or email: taelour@rtcwashoe.com

Public Meeting Scheduled for Veterans Parkway Extension to Geiger Grade Roundabout Project: The RTC will host an Open House Community Meeting to preview information for the Veterans Parkway Extension to Geiger Grade Roundabout Project on February 11, 2010. The meeting will be held at the South Valleys Library located at 15650 Wedge Parkway in Reno, from 5 to 8pm. The project will extend Veterans Parkway to Geiger Grade Road and install a roundabout at the intersection. Improvements also include widening Veterans Parkway from 2 to 4 lanes from Geiger Grade Road, north to Rio Wrangler Parkway. Currently, there is no connection from Veterans Parkway to Geiger Grade Road. A study was completed in early 2009 that determined a roundabout would be the safest intersection control and would function effectively well into the future. This project will correct many safety issues in the area, such as cut-through traffic on Curti Ranch Road, as well as an existing curve on Geiger Grade Road which has been the site of several vehicle crashes and one fatality. The project will also provide complete street improvements and improve safety for all users including cyclists and pedestrians. The funding approved for the project is \$8.2 million using Regional Road Impact Fees (RRIF) and RTC-5 funds. Construction is anticipated to begin in spring 2010 with completion in fall 2010. For information, Blaine Petersen at 335-1871 or e-mail: bpetersen@rtcwashoe.com

Victorian Avenue Reconstruction Project Phase 2 Update: Phase 2 of the Victorian Avenue reconstruction project started on September 14, 2009. Much of the reconstruction work has been completed. The remaining work, which consists of sidewalk construction, bike paths, and landscape islands, as well as paving on the north side against an existing curb line, began in mid-November. The work was progressing well until a snow storm and cold weather shut the project down beginning December 7, 2009, until January 5, 2010. Work has resumed with intermittent delays as winter storms have continued. For more information, Warren Call at 335-1881 or email: wcall@rtcwashoe.com

MyRTC Awareness Promotion Underway: To increase MyRTC registrations among transit riders, a new, targeted promotion was launched on January 21, and will continue through February 24, 2010. MyRTC was introduced to the public in summer 2009 and provides everyone the opportunity to receive e-mail or text message updates about RTC projects and programs of interest to them, when they are updated on www.rtcwashoe.com. Subscription is quick, easy and clearly identifiable on our website with the MyRTC icon, which is illustrated in my opening statement at the top of this e-News communication. By registering for MyRTC, transit riders are able to receive urgent transit updates via e-mail or text messaging. MyRTC is also an important element of the new Snow Route program. Everyone who registers for this service during the promotion will be entered to win a free 31-Day RTC RIDE transit pass. Five passes will be given away to eligible MyRTC subscribers on or about February 28, 2010. The MyRTC "Free Pass" promotion is being advertised online, on RTC buses and throughout RTC transit centers.

Sheriff's Office:

On January 4, 2010, Washoe County's new alarm ordinance and alarm reduction program was implemented. Washoe County has contracted with Alarm Tracking & Billing (ATB) Services to assist in the implementation, billing and tracking of all residential and commercial false alarms within Washoe County. The Washoe County Sheriff's Office responds to an average of 4516 alarms per year, in which 99.9% of the alarms are false due to various reasons. The average alarm call, due to the unknown risk, requires the Washoe County Sheriff's Office to dispatch two patrol units to each alarm.

There are several goals the new alarm reduction program is designed to accomplish. First and foremost, to reduce the large amount of false alarms the Sheriff's Office responds to in a given year. Secondly, to educate the alarm users on the proper utilization of their alarms in preventing false alarms due to owner error. Over the past three years, both the Cities of Sparks and Reno have not only implemented similar ordinances, but have also contracted with ATB in their own Alarm Reduction program. ATB was contracted by Washoe County due to their unique ability to not only track, but complete the monthly and yearly billing process for all false alarms.

Over the past month ATB has sent a yearly renewal fee to all alarm users within the unincorporated areas of Washoe County who have an active alarm. If you have received one of these bills it is not a scam but part of the new Alarm Reduction program. It should be noted that ATB is located in Colorado Springs and therefore all renewal fees, false alarm fees and fines should be mailed to their address in Colorado Springs.

If you have any questions regarding the Alarm Reduction program or Washoe County Alarm Ordinance please contact Lt. Tim O'Conner at 328-3350.

Regional Parks and Open Space:

Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting on February 2, 2010: public hearing to discussion and possibly recommend to the Board of County Commissioners for the operation and maintenance of parks in Sun Valley by the Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID). For more information, contact Joanna Schultz at 823-6520 or email: JSchultz@washoecounty.us

Christmas Tree Recycling: Almost 10,500 trees were recycled through this year's Christmas Tree Recycling campaign at Bartley Ranch, Rancho San Rafael Regional Parks and Shadow Mountain Sports Complex. This annual event is coordinated by Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (website: www.KTMB.org, phone: 851-5185 and email: staff@ktmb.org) in partnership with Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space, City of Sparks Parks and Recreation City of Reno Urban Forestry. Christmas tree mulch is very useful for preventing land erosion, weed abatement, animal bedding and the creation of walkways and paths through landscaping.

19th Annual Phonebook Recycling Program: This year's campaign to recycle old phonebooks into trees for parks went well for Washoe County. Washoe County collected 17,980 pounds, Reno collected 8,540 pounds and Sparks collected 6,520 pounds.

The Wilbur May Museum's new Animal Grossology exhibit: opens Saturday, January 30. This highly interactive family exhibit mixes education with giggles to help introduce kids to natural science. Oozing with disgusting science and interactive learning games, Animal Grossology is sure to provide a unique perspective on the least-loved members of the animal kingdom. The exhibit will be on display through April 18, 2010. Museum hours are Wednesdays - Saturdays from 10am to 4pm. Exhibit cost: \$8.00 adults and \$7.00 children under 18 and seniors 62 and over; group rates also available. For more information, visit: www/parks/museum/museum.html or call: 785-5961.

Junior Snow Ranger program: Families who are looking for ways to introduce children ages 6-14 to the wonders of winter in northern Nevada are invited to take part in the self-guided program. Junior Snow Rangers is a free do-it-yourself winter nature adventure with self-guided hikes and activities designed to help children learn more about nature's winter wonders and how to cope with winter weather. To get started, pick up a Junior Snow Ranger Booklet from Bartley Ranch Regional Park.. Once the booklet has been completed, children meet with the park ranger to talk about what they learned. Participants who complete their booklet by March 31, 2010 will receive a Junior Snow Ranger certificate and an invitation to a special End of Winter Party. For more information, call 828-6612.

2010 Nature Program Series: A new partnership between Washoe County's Department of Regional Parks and Open Space and the Great Basin Institute is bringing nature programs for all ages back to the Galena Creek Recreational Area. Programs include monthly stargazing parties at Galena Creek Regional Park, classroom crafts for kids, naturalist-led hikes, snowshoeing and more. Great Basin Institute staff will also operate the new Galena Creek Visitors Center which is scheduled to open this summer. For details, call the Great Basin Institute at 674-5486 or visit www.thegreatbasininstitute.org

Cottonwood Trees Removed: The City of Reno's Urban Forestry division saved the Department thousands of dollars by removing several hazardous cottonwood trees from Rancho San Rafael Regional Park. The large trees were evaluated with the help of Steve Churchillo, Urban Forester and Matt Toll, Municipal Urban tree worker for the City of Reno. The City then removed the trees considered to be the highest liability, saving the County and estimated \$4,500 for the cost of removal.

Gardening in Nevada Workshop: Washoe County Regional Parks & Open Space and University of Nevada Cooperative Extension present a series of free workshops aimed at helping you to become a better gardener. "Gardening in Nevada" programs will be held from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. every Tuesday in February and March to provide information and answer general horticulture questions for northern Nevada gardeners. For a complete listing, visit www.washoecountyparks.com

Old Fashioned Family Valentine's Day: An old-fashioned Valentine's Day with crafts and stories inside the Historic Huffaker Schoolhouse at Bartley Ranch Regional Park, located 6000 Bartley Ranch Road, Reno. Enjoy making time tested, romantic Victorian era crafts such as paper lace and pinprick valentines, and soft dough ornaments, while listening to

traditional Valentine's related stories during a special open house at the historic school from 1 to 4pm. For information, call 828-6612.

Spinner and Weavers Guild: Members of the Carson Sierra Spinners and Weavers Guild are coming to Bartley Ranch Park's Historic Huffaker Schoolhouse, located at 6000 Bartley Ranch Road, Reno, to share the beauty of their ancient and highly respected craft on Saturday, February 13 from 10:30 to 2:30pm. For more information, call: 828-6612 or visit: www.carsonsierraspinnerandweavers.blogspot.com

Washoe County Library System:

Free tax help: AARP and IRS Certified VITA/TCE Volunteer Preparers will offer free tax help at the following locations: Downtown Reno (phone: 327-8312), Incline Village (phone: 832-4130), North Valleys (phone: 972-0281), Northwest Reno (phone: 787-4100), Senior Center (phone: 328-2586), Sierra View (phone: 827-3232), South Valleys (phone: 851-5190), Spanish Springs (phone: 424-1800) and Sparks (phone: 352-3200). For specific information and schedules, see www.washoecountylibrary.us

Learn English: A new series of English language learning sessions begins February 3. Informal conversation sessions will be held every Wednesday from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at Sparks Library. Conversation Corner is open to all, and no advance sign-ups are required. The group will practice speaking English around various scenarios that the average person encounters every day. Participants will engage in casual conversation around a series of topics like grocery shopping, doctor visits, sports, American holidays and many more. These practice classes are ideal for the non-native English speaker who has at least a little English, but is motivated to improve English skills. For more information, call Andrea Tavener at 829-7323.

Public Broadcasting: Join KNPB/Channel 5 at Washoe County libraries and have fun while learning. Some of Public Broadcasting's most popular programs for young people will be featured. You'll watch a clip from a PBS Kids program and do an activity. Plus, every child who attends will receive a free book! Featured programs include Word Girl, Martha Speaks, Super Why and Reading Rainbow Writer's Workshop. Details are at www.washoecountylibrary.us or call 327-8312.

Northern Nevada Reads: Join your family and friends in reading Robert Laxalt's beloved novel, The Basque Hotel, attend some great events and participate in book discussions. There will be explorations of Basque culture, and you'll have opportunities to share your own cultural heritage and your family's immigrant experiences. It's all in keeping with the theme, "The Immigrant Experience in Northern Nevada." For more information, call 356-1007.

Washoe Law Library:

Bankruptcy Law Seminar: On Thursday, February 25, 2010 from 5 to 7pm, attorney Patricia Phair will conduct a free legal seminar on Bankruptcy Law at the Washoe County Law Library, located at 75 Court St (Old Courthouse), Reno. For more information, call 328-3250.

Washoe County Clerk's Office:

The Washoe County Clerk's office has launched a new online searchable records system that allows citizens to search databases for marriage license applications, fictitious firm

name filings, and ministers. Citizens may also pre-fill information for these two applications to reduce their time at the customer service counter. Please visit their site at www.washoecounty.us/clerks

Water Resources:

Fieldcreek Effluent Reservoir Cover: On January 7, 2010, Water Resources staff measured ice and water levels at the Fieldcreek Effluent Reservoir n ArrowCreek in preparation to remove debris out of the reservoir prior to the start of construction to repair the reservoir cover. The utility division has determined that partially draining some of the 17' of water that remains in the reservoir is the most effective method of breaking-up and removing the three-inch layer of ice capping the surface. Once the reservoir is fully drained, crews will begin removing residual ice, dirt and debris. Construction of the new reservoir cover is scheduled to begin in February.

Senior Services:

Senior Stars Valentine's Show: Reno musician Colin Ross knows there are plenty of talented seniors in the area and he wants to give them all a chance to shine on Valentine's Day. Ross is planning a Senior Stars talent showcase for Sunday, February 14 at the Washoe County Senior Center. "You don't even need to play an instrument. If you just love singing old songs, we've got a place for you in the show." Ross will conduct four pre-show workshops for performers to prepare for the big day. Workshops are scheduled from 1:30 – 3:00pm on February 3, February 10, February 12, and February 13. Everyone who participates in the pre-show workshops will be invited to be part of the Valentine's Day performance. For more information, contact Colin Ross at 544-5215 or visit: www.ColinRossMusic.com

Public Works:

Snow Removal Update: To date Washoe County's Road Division has spent \$580,000 dollars servicing county roads for snow and ice events, employees have logged over 10,000 hours in support of these services as of mid January. The Road Division has already spent approximately \$75,000 in overtime and stand-by funds to treat these weather events. Because the Road Division has been forced to reduce its operating budget for four consecutive years the response to these types of weather events has been hindered and is currently taking staff longer to treat priority one routes and in some cases not treating lower priority routes or roads at all if on overtime.

Truckee River Flood Project:

Home Elevation Program: On January 21, 2010, the Flood Project Coordinating Committee (FPCC) approved the elevation of homes in the Hidden Valley, Eastside Subdivision and the nearby area. A \$2 million dollar budget was approved to begin Phase 1 and raise approximately 20 homes in the area. This is the first steps toward an overall project encompassing approximately 115 homes that are continually threatened by Steamboat Creek. Next steps include the finalization of details about the plan and sign-off by the Washoe County Commission. Construction is expected to begin as early as summer 2010. For more information, visit: www.truckeeflood.us or call: 850-7460.

External Peer Review: On January 21, 2010, the US Army Corps of Engineers updated the FPCC on the recently completed peer review of the economic and hydraulic models to develop the National Economic Development plan (NED) to determine the level of flood protection to be cost-shared by the Corps of Engineers. The peer reviewers identified a number of issues with the Corps' technical work and recommended correction of the significant errors identified. This effort is expected to take 6 to 8 months and as a result to delay the potential Congressional authorization of the project by a year. The benefit of the approach is that the errors corrected may improve the end result and increase the level of protection selected for the NED. The additional quality assurance review is also expected to provide a greater level of confidence to the ultimate peer reviewers. For more information, visit: www.truckee flood.us or call: 850-7460.

Joint Powers Authority: Flood Project Coordinating Committee, Washoe County and the two cities have all approved a Joint Powers Authority agreement for the Truckee Meadows Flood Project. The key provisions of the document (available at www.truckee flood.us) outlines the nuances associated with the JPA including transitioning from a 23-member board to a 6-member board with equal representation of the three jurisdictions and a change from unanimous voting to majority rules, with a few items requiring approval by 75% of the body.

Social Services:

As of December 31, 2009 the Department of Social Services finalized 158 adoptions for the calendar year providing permanent, loving families to abused or neglected children who were unable to be reunified with their biological parents. This is the highest number since the County took over adoptions from the State of Nevada in 2002. For more information about foster care and adoption opportunities, please visit our site at www.washoecounty.us/socsvr or call 337-4400.

Community Relations:

Washoe County employees donated more than \$86,000 to help the local United Way of Sierra Nevada provide much needed services in our community at a time when it's needed most. We are very proud of our employees' compassion and generosity even during a time when they have experienced wage decreases and hardships themselves.

University of Nevada-Reno, Cooperative Extension (UNRCE):

Food Safety Workshop: On February 19, 2010, the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the UNR College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources are helping Nevada's farmers with a program helping them manage the legal, marketing, and financial risks associated with food safety. The program, "Food Safety: A Tool for Managing Risk and Expanding Direct Marketing Opportunities," will be presented in Fallon with simultaneous interactive video at seven locations in Douglas, Humboldt, Lincoln, Lyon, northeast Clark, White Pine and Washoe counties. The registration fee is \$20, which covers snacks, lunch, refreshments and all materials. Registration and checks, made payable to the Board of Regents, should be forwarded to Maggie Cowee, University of Nevada, Reno, Mail Stop 204, Reno, NV 89557-0105. Registration at the door will be based on space availability. For more information, contact Maggie Cowee at 784-6499, or email: mcowee@cabnr.unr.edu

Workshop on water quality issues and laws: On Friday, March 18 from 8:30am to Noon, a live presentation will be at the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Office at 5305 Mill St., in Reno. This workshop will be simultaneously video conferenced to Douglas County Cooperative Extension Office at 1329 Waterloo Lane in Gardnerville and the Lyon County Cooperative Extension Office at 540 S. Main Street in Yerington. Topics include: water quality basics, such as defining point source pollution and nonpoint source pollution, and how they affect our water quality; urbanization and the water cycle, such as how water infiltrates and recharges, how a watershed functions, and how the water cycle is altered by development; water quality challenges facing our community, including discussion on clean water laws and standards and impacts on waterways, such as how streams are widened, stream channels are changed, and wildlife habitat is lost. Although the workshop is free, preregistration by March 12 is required. For more information or to register, call the 856-8402 or go to www.unce.unr.edu/programs/sites/nemo/events

Reno-Sparks Chambers of Commerce:

The County is pleased to have partnered with the Reno/Sparks Chamber of Commerce to present a new show, `Working Together For Economic Vitality` available for viewing on demand on our website and playing on TV-217. Please visit our website at www.washoecounty.us to see the latest 5 minute video highlighting the Chamber`s upcoming Directions 2010 event scheduled for February 10th. There are other short videos available about county programs and services that you may find beneficial; just click on `The Washoe Channel` logo on our website and go to `video on demand` to browse our selections.

Affordable Housing:

Washoe County is participating with the two cities in two programs funded by the federal government and administered by the Reno Housing Authority to purchase foreclosed properties which are then rehabilitated and re-sold or rented to middle and low-income families in our community. Between these two programs, the region has received approximately \$25 million which the RHA is using to purchase these foreclosed homes in the Stead, Sun Valley, `old Sparks,` and the Oliver- Montello neighborhood in Reno. The programs are known as the Neighborhood Stabilization Programs 1 and 2. These programs are beneficial to the community in three ways. First, when the homes are re-habilitated using Energy Star appliances and other energy efficient materials. Second, by preventing foreclosed homes from falling into disrepair, other homes in the area do not suffer a negative impact on their value. And third, the programs provide quality housing to middle and low-income, eligible families in our community.

