

**CARSON CITY CULTURE & TOURISM AUTHORITY**  
**SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Carson City Culture & Tourism Authority was held Monday September 8, 2025, at the Carson City Community Center, Bob Crowell Board Room, 851 E. William Street, Carson City, Nevada beginning at 4:00pm.

**PRESENT:** Andrew Reno  
Diana LaForge  
Stacey Giomi  
Garrett Lepire  
Daman Baath (via WebEx)

**STAFF PRESENT:** David Peterson, Executive Director  
Chris Kipp, Operations & Finance Manager  
Eric Brooks, Arts & Culture Program Manager  
Stuart Wexler, Events & Sales Manager  
Kasie Saldaña, Administrative Assistant

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jennifer Budge, Carson City Parks and Recreation Director

1. **Call to Order.** Mr. Reno called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.** A roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance.** Mr. Reno led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Reno brought the next item to the Board's attention.

**4. Public comment:**

Jennifer Budge, the Parks and Recreation Director, thanked the board and the VCC team for dedicating a portion of the transient lodging tax to Centennial Park improvements. She provided an update on improvements at Centennial Park. She stated that on August 21<sup>st</sup> the Board of Supervisors awarded a contract to Sprint Turf LLC for the conversion of the upper fields to synthetic turf, this project is going to start in early October and is scheduled to be finished in April, depending on weather. The contract includes replacement of all four fields, a shock absorption pad, a retaining wall behind field number seven for drainage, trees, and a wind screen. Staff will be harvesting sod from the existing fields into the park system to maximize everything available on site. Jennifer Budge also provided additional updates at Centennial Park including design on an overall drainage master plan to protect the park from hillside drainage, a park master plan for consideration in October and final approval in November, resurfacing and reconstruction of eight tennis courts, and a new tennis restroom. Centennial Park should now be able to accommodate tournaments and other opportunities that benefit residents and tourism.

After Jennifer finished her comment, Mr. Giomi asked if the conduit for the scoreboards at the fields will remain in place for future use. Jennifer explained that the conduit will remain, there are two scoreboards that need to be replaced due to wear, and that they may be able to use contingency funds to rehabilitate the boards. Jennifer concluded that the conduit will remain with the electrical.

Mr. Reno took a moment to welcome our newest board member, Garrett Lepire. Mr. Lepire thanked Mr. Reno and stated that he is looking forward to serving with the board.

Mr. Reno brought the next item to the Board's attention.

**5. For Possible Action:** Approval of Minutes – August 11, 2025 CTA Board Meeting.

Mr. Giomi made a motion to approve.

**Second – Mr. Reno**

**Approved – Unanimously**

Mr. Reno brought the next item to the Board's attention

**Consent Agenda**

**6. For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the CTA Statement of Accounts Payable checks, totaling \$96,686.30, and p-card charges, totaling \$14,725.06, for July 2025.

**7. For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the adjusted CTA fiscal year ("FY") 2025 budget report, including a comparative statement of adjusted revenue totaling \$3,801,858.25, expenses totaling \$2,831,157.77, and fund balance for all CTA Funds totaling \$5,079,330.48.

**8. For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the adjusted CTA fiscal year ("FY") 2026 budget report, including a comparative statement of adjusted revenue totaling \$297,947.42, expenses totaling \$124,060.50, and fund balance for all CTA Funds totaling \$4,898,684.83.

**End of the Consent Agenda**

**9. Item(s) pulled from the Consent Agenda will be heard at this time.**

Mr. Reno asked if any member of the public would like to have any item from the consent agenda pulled for further discussion. There were no public comments.

Mr. Lepire made a motion to approve.

**Second – Mr. Reno**

**Approved – Unanimously**

Mr. Reno brought the next item to the Board's attention

**10. For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible action regarding the election of a Chairperson for the Carson City Culture & Tourism Authority Board of Directors with the term expiring at the January 2027 CTA Board Meeting, pursuant to NRS 244A.611.

Mr. Lepire made a motion to approve Andrew Reno as the Chairperson.

**Second – Mr. Giomi**

**Approved – Unanimously**

- 11. For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible action regarding the election of a Vice Chairperson for the Carson City Culture & Tourism Authority Board of Directors with the term expiring at the January 2027 CTA Board Meeting, pursuant to NRS 244A.611.

Mr. Giomi explained that he does not think it is appropriate to volunteer himself for a position.

Mr. Reno asked to open the position up to volunteers.

Diana LaForge volunteered for the position.

Mr. Lepire made a motion to approve Diana LaForge as the Vice Chairperson.

**Second** – Mr. Reno

**Approved** – Unanimously

- 12. For Discussion Only:** Presentation and discussion regarding the Carson City Arts & Culture Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Implementation Monitoring FY2025.

Eric Brooks discussed arts and culture highlights of fiscal year 2025. In 2025 the Visit Carson City team was able to create an inventory of arts and culture resources and incorporate those resources into the social media plan. VCC has continued strong partnerships with the Brewery Arts Center and the Nevada State Museum and the ability to highlight diverse cultural traditions in our community. VCC has been able to continue reach into the Hispanic population with Cinco de Mayo and the Tamale Festival through collaboration with the BAC and Carson City Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. The mural festival was a highlight of FY25 as the murals have been able to assist in stimulating tourism, the downtown economy, and contribute to the beautification of the city. Food and music continue to allow cultures to be accessible from one culture to another. The 3D Cultural Corridor, now the Dust and Wonder Trail, made progress in FY25 and will continue to make progress with the help of extra resources, bodies, abilities, and brains to make Carson City even stronger as the region grows. With the city's location, we will be the hub of the corridor. In addition to the murals map, which is receiving several additional murals, Eric has been working on a sculpture map over the past year. Finally, the Dust and Wonder Trail will take the lead in destination development and will assist in the creation of a regional arts and culture calendar for residents and tourists, increasing communications between the regions and increasing event attendance.

- 13. Monthly Non-Action Items for Presentation and Discussion Only:**

**A. Executive Director's Update – David Peterson**

- V&T Railway Commission Update – The new V&T website is live. They are working through a few small things, but Mark Twain Train tickets are on sale, and V&T is gearing up for Polar Express Tickets. The new website is [vtrailway.com](http://vtrailway.com).
- Travel Nevada America's 250 Grant – The grant that VCC applied for recommended for the Nevada Commission on Tourism. The grant should move forward for final approval on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September. David invited Eric Brooks to speak on the grant application. Eric discussed utilizing the grant to create way-finding signs for Carson City that will eventually tie into the region. The America 250 grant needed to tie into history, Eric and the team collaborated on a proposed project involving ten four-foot railroad spikes at important locations, that display a word involving the locations' history in braille, English, the three local native languages, and QR codes that will map to the other spikes. The spikes will be "Points of Unity", and the intention is to eventually have them in other areas around the region. David explained that these points of Unity will play into the Dust and Wonder Trail and the V&T Railroad that ties

the regional cities together. David also emphasized that the grant application does still have to go through two different commissions and hopefully we will receive approval. Mr. Giomi asked if the railroad spikes will be in historic locations and if the QR codes will provide history, noting that we do not want to duplicate the Kit Carson Trail. Eric explained that there will be a mix of historical, art focused, and interesting places with a story; he also explained that there will be external information on the spikes and information on the website from the QR code. Mr. Giomi shared that he thought it was a great idea and that it would be a good idea to incorporate a spike passport that people can register for, visit so many locations, and receive something in return. David noted that the board approved Estipona Group's contract for the Dust and Wonder Trail website and app, and that the app can be leveraged as a part of the idea. David emphasized that there are a lot of opportunities and places to put spikes, which will guide people out into the region.

**B. Transient Occupancy Tax Actual vs Forecast – David Peterson**

- FY25 – Fiscal Year 2025 ended with \$29.574 million in tax revenue, a record 5.68% increase in total tax lodging revenue. David noted that the audit may adjust the numbers, but all data is submitted and finalized.
- FY26 – David reminded the board that from the final budget, VCC budgeted \$30.656 million, so that is the number that we are comparing against. FY26 July is coming in a little off, but it is important to note that FY25 July was very successful, and there are still rooms down at some properties, but it does look like FY26 July will be down just under 4%.

**C. Arts & Culture Update – Eric Brooks**

- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Watercolor Carson City – 25 artists participated in the 2025 Watercolor Carson City Plein Air Festival (9 more than 2024's event). Geoff Allen from Encinitas, CA was the featured artist and led a demonstration on the Monday evening of the event. Four \$1,000 first place rewards were given to the best story, structure, landscape, and close-up. Over 300 people attended the VIP reception on Friday evening, and the auction on Saturday and Sunday. 89 paintings were created by the artists over the 5 days, with 59 paintings being purchased. The BAC plans to continue this event in 2026 with a national call to artists.
- New Sculpture – Eric is working with artist Seth Johnson to place his sculpture "Aster" in the Seely Loop in Mills Park. The inspiration for the sculpture was derived from a local flower and railyard encompassed by the community. The project will be made of powder coated, fully welded tube steel, and will be easy to maintain. Mr. Giomi asked where the sculpture is going and where the funding for the sculpture is coming from. Eric explained that it will be going in the Seely Loop at Mills Park, he also explained that funding is a continuation of the leadership class from last year's funds, part of his budget, and a partial donation from the artist. Eric also explained that a portion of his budget this year is to have a piece of public art in every park.
- Silver State Art Festival – The Silver State Art Festival was a bit smaller than previous years but was very successful.
- Upcoming Events – Paula Saponaro's Retrospective reception will take place on Sunday September 14<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, Murals and Music begins September 15<sup>th</sup> for 5 days, and Mark Twain Days will take place October 16<sup>th</sup> through October 19<sup>th</sup>. Finally, unfortunately the Nevada Day Powwow has been cancelled for this year.

After Eric asked for any questions or comments, David Peterson noted that 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of the paintings from the Watercolor Festival were sold. Eric emphasized that about \$15,000 worth of paintings were sold. Additionally, Eric stated that on the record, Colleen Reynolds is the person responsible for the event happening.

#### **D. Events & Sales Update – Stu Wexler**

- Battle in the Sierras Boxing – Battle in the Sierras hosted a total of 23 fights and 46 fighters (22 from California) at Fuji Hall. Attendance of 400 to 500 people per day left standing room only. David Peterson was able to attend and stated that it was an awesome experience and discussed a future event where Northern Nevada and Southern Nevada competed. Cisco, the local boxing club owner, is currently taking some of his boxers to other states and is in the process of creating the North versus South competition that David mentioned. Stu also shared that Cisco knows a horse owner in Napa Valley, Billy, who may be bringing dancing horses to Carson City to add to the boxing event. Billy will be coming to Carson City to complete a site tour, and he has invited David and Stu to attend his property in Napa Valley to experience an event there.

Mr. Lepire suggested the event could tie into Cinco de Mayo Events or that the fight event could tie into Nevada Day and could be called something like “Battle for Nevada”. Stu stated that there would be something that they could discuss with Billy for next year. David added that Mr. Lepire’s ideas were great and that the team had talked to Billy about having more events in the fall. Stu added that they could talk to Billy about an event with the cancellation of the Nevada Day Powwow and that maybe they could come up with something with the availability coming from the cancellation of the Powwow.

- Outlaw Flat Trac Racing – The Outlaw Flat Trac event took place in August, and Stu believes that the cooler weather contributed to better attendance. There were 150 registered riders from California, Arizona, Oregon, and Idaho. An estimated 800 tickets were sold for both nights of the event. Out-of-state attendance also contributed to people staying in the Carson City area.
- Fraufecht Women’s Tournament – Over Labor Day, the Fraufecht Women’s Tournament hosted around 50 participants, including women from other countries. They are hoping to have 90 to 100 participants, and additional spectators, as they grow this event through expanding their marketing and increasing exposure to the event.
- September and October Events – Kaboom Kon, The Bonanza Kennel Club dog show, Sparrow Lock Picks event at the historic prison, NICA, The Carson City Sheriff’s Office K9 Unit Challenge, and the Bronco Super Celebration will occur in September and October. Mr. Giomi asked for further information on Kaboom Kon and Stu explained that it is an event similar to Comic-Con. Regarding the Bronco Super Celebration, Mr. Lepire took time to note that offroad is an area that the team can really take advantage of that we do not right now, stating that there is a huge offroad vehicle community in our area and a great trail system for it. He would like to figure out an event to generate offroad vehicle tourism. Stu emphasized that we have a great area for off road vehicles.
- Upcoming Trade Shows – Stu will be attending the TEAMS show in Columbus, Ohio. He will attend 1-on-1 appointments with convention bureaus, sports commissions, hotels, suppliers, and sponsors. The focus will be getting people to come to the new fields, new pickle ball courts, and the Carson Ridge Disc Golf Course.

#### **E. Marketing & PR Update – David Peterson**

- Lydia Beck was not able to attend the board meeting. David Peterson presented on her behalf.
- Digital Growth: In the month of August, Digital Growth increased and lodging referrals stayed steady. There was additional impressive growth with the implementation of the arts and culture strategy.

- **Public Relations:** Carson City was featured on Wild Nevada, KOLO, and KTVN, as well as KQED, the Bay's PBS station, and KQET, Monterey Bay's PBS Station, which are two outlets located within Carson City's target drive markets.
- **Carson to Canada Quest Update:** Julianne Mahoney completed the Carson to Canada Quest, and our second hiker Audrey Payne is two to three weeks out of completing the quest.
- **ESTO Research Findings:** Research findings have discovered that travelers are planning road trips, traveling to see friends and family, focusing on museums, arts, and culture, and that inflation is making an impact on travel. Research also found that 40% of travelers are using AI without realizing they are doing so, , they are seeking welcoming and joyful ad creation, and affordability.

**F. Future Agenda Items – David Peterson: None**

**G. Upcoming Meetings –** The next CTA Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, October 13, 2025, at 4:00pm.

Mr. Reno brought the next item to the Board's attention.

**14. CTA Board Comments or Announcements and Requests for Information:**

Mr. Giomi took time to note that the city is currently working with Madison AI to implement a closed-circuit AI tool to research information internally from board meetings and that VCC may not be able to add recent board meeting minutes to the database, but if the team is interested, they can reach out to Stephanie as she is leading the project. Mr. Lepire took time to contribute to the comment by explaining that one would be able to research how much money had been spent on turf over the year. Mr. Giomi then emphasized that the tool will not be available to the public and will only be taking information from the data that the city puts into the tool, as it will not be pulling information from the web.

Mr. Reno brought the next item to the Board's attention.

**15. Public Comment: None.**

Mr. Reno brought the next item to the Board's attention.

**16. For Possible Action: To Adjourn.**

Mr. Reno made a motion to adjourn.

**Minutes Approved – Unanimously**

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew Reno

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Diana LaForge