

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

**Eighty-Second Session
February 16, 2023**

The Committee on Judiciary was called to order by Chair Brittney Miller at 8 a.m. on Thursday, February 16, 2023, in Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4406 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda [[Exhibit A](#)], the Attendance Roster [[Exhibit B](#)], and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/82nd2023.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Brittney Miller, Chair
Assemblywoman Elaine Marzola, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod
Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen
Assemblywoman Venicia Considine
Assemblywoman Danielle Gallant
Assemblyman Ken Gray
Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen
Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy
Assemblywoman Selena La Rue Hatch
Assemblywoman Erica Mosca
Assemblywoman Sabra Newby
Assemblyman David Orentlicher
Assemblywoman Shondra Summers-Armstrong
Assemblyman Toby Yurek

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Gregory T. Hafen II, Assembly District No. 36



STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Diane C. Thornton, Committee Policy Analyst
Bradley A. Wilkinson, Committee Counsel
Devon Kajatt, Committee Manager
Garrett Tamagni, Committee Secretary
Ashley Torres, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Misty Grimmer, representing Nevada Resort Association
Peter Krueger, State Executive, Nevada Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association
Michael Alonso, representing Caesars Entertainment
Caitlin Gatchalian, Nevada Government Relations Director, American Heart Association
Lea Case, representing Nevada Public Health Association
Jason Walker, Sergeant, Administrative Division, Legislative Liaison, Washoe County Sheriff's Office
Corey Solferino, Chief Deputy, Operations Bureau, Washoe County Sheriff's Office
Beth Schmidt, Director-Police Sergeant, Office of Intergovernmental Services, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Adrian Hunt, Police Detective, Office of Intergovernmental Services, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

Chair Miller:

[Roll was called. Committee protocol was explained.] We will begin with our bill hearing on Assembly Bill 122, then we will have a BDR introduction, and then presentations. I will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 122. This measure will be presented by one of the bill sponsors, Assemblyman Hafen, and Misty Grimmer.

Assembly Bill 122: Revises provisions relating to tobacco. (BDR 32-728)

Assemblyman Gregory T. Hafen II, Assembly District No. 36:

Probably half of the things we do in this building every session is fix the things that we messed up last session and that is exactly why we are here today. We did not necessarily mess things up, but when we went to implement Assembly Bill 360 of the 81st Session, we realized the way the language was written, it was very broad. It included any kind of transaction of tobacco "sales," even if it is somebody sitting at a blackjack table getting a comp cigarette. That was not the intention of the bill. The intent of A.B. 360 of the 81st Session was to clamp down on underage minors under the age of 21 purchasing tobacco at convenience stores, grocery stores, and tobacco stores. The reason that came about was there is federal money—Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Agency (SAPTA) funds—somewhere in the realm of \$10 million, that Nevada is at risk every year of losing because we have such a high youth smoking percentage. Assembly Bill 360 of the 81st Session was

enacted to try to clamp down on that. It went into effect January 1 of this year; that is when we realized we had some technical issues that we wanted to clarify this legislative session, and the Speaker was gracious enough to carry this bill forward with me. I am going to turn it over to Ms. Grimmer to talk about the technical sections.

Misty Grimmer, representing Nevada Resort Association:

Assembly Bill 122 is before you due to some of the nuances of performing the electronic age verification for tobacco transactions on the gaming floors of our casinos. If I can provide a bit of context, our properties are fully aware that they hold a privileged license in being unrestricted gaming licensees. That license comes with a great deal of responsibility to the community to ensure that only people who are legally allowed to participate in the array of activities that our resorts offer are doing so. Our licenses also come with stringent oversight by the Nevada Gaming Control Board (GCB), especially related to age restriction on the gaming floor. Furthermore, the GCB is also enabled to hold us doubly accountable for every law that applies to us as Nevada businesses. As you might expect, preserving the integrity of our gaming license is unquestionably priority number one for every one of our members. It is because of the highly restricted and regulated environment that is present on the gaming floor and the ways that tobacco transactions take place in the gaming areas that we are requesting those areas to be excluded from the requirements of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 370.521. The gaming floor is already restricted to prohibit even the presence of individuals under the age of 21 because of the gambling restrictions.

I myself recently experienced how stringently we impose this when I had friends in town, and we were asked to move away from machines because one member of our party was underage. It took security about two minutes to find us and tell us to move on.

From a practical standpoint, on the gaming floor our patrons move about constantly from machine to machine and table to table, as do our cocktail servers, who would be the most likely to provide the patrons with tobacco products. Mind you, these are patrons that we already have eyes on constantly to be sure they are of age to gamble in the first place. Furthermore, the types of tobacco transactions are different on the gaming floor. In many cases the cigarettes are provided as a comp similar to cocktails; it does not fit the traditional scenario of going up to a cashier and making a purchase. Additionally, our gaming patrons quite often apply for the rewards cards, which makes the process of gaming easier and also earns them rewards as they go along. These rewards can be redeemed for tobacco products. However, in order for a patron to have a rewards card, their ability to gamble—meaning their age—has already been verified.

I want to clarify that A.B. 122 is only requesting an exclusion for the gaming areas of the resort casino. The provision of NRS 370.521 would still apply to the remainder of the property such as gift shops and retail outlets. We would like to propose a small amendment [[Exhibit C](#)] that I believe the Committee has in front of them. This amendment would limit the exclusion to just face-to-face transactions. This is to ensure that tobacco vending machines would still be required to have a form of age verification for purchases. Most of the machines today do have the tech attached to them that verify somebody's age before they

can receive the product from the machine, but not necessarily all of them. This amendment assures that vending machines are not excluded from the requirements of this chapter. We appreciate your consideration of the bill, and I am happy to answer questions.

Assemblyman Hafen:

This amendment has come from the Office of the Attorney General. We have been working with Attorney General Ford and his staff for the last three years to try to address the problems of the loss of SAPTA funding and underage smoking. I have to thank the Office of the Attorney General, and this is a friendly amendment coming from him. We are absolutely in support of it.

Misty Grimmer:

Since the bill has been enacted, some of the response from the public has been, Are you collecting my data when my identification card (ID) gets scanned? We want to make it clear that there is no requirement in the law that the data be held or collected. Speaking for my members and, I think, also the other businesses that are involved in doing the age verification, nobody wants that data. We do not want to keep it. We do not want to hold it—just to put that on the record for the sake of the public.

Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:

As a high school teacher, I see very high tobacco use with our youth, and that is a deep concern of mine. I have students that are 17 and 18 and they look 20 or 30 or much older than they actually are. I have also been in casinos where the difference between the gaming floor and not the gaming floor is maybe a color change in the carpet. There is not a line, there is not a rope, there is nothing there to separate that. My question is regarding these students—these young people that look older and are not having to verify before they go on to the gaming floor—how are you ensuring that you are not giving cigarettes to youth that should not have them?

Assemblyman Hafen:

In our conversations with the Office of the Attorney General and other stakeholders, one of the issues at large is enforcement. The Office of the Attorney General is limited on the number of inspectors and enforcers. This change is saying we have limited resources; we want to target our resources in the places where they are obtaining tobacco the most, which is not on the casino floors. We are going to let the Gaming Control Board handle the gaming floors because they have more staff, more enforcement, and frankly, they are at risk of losing their license if these individuals are on the gaming floor obtaining tobacco products and gambling. It is kind of a two-facet, that we want to prevent the youth smoking because we want to take our enforcement that we currently have, which is very limited and target the areas of most transactions with the youth and say, "Gaming Control Board, you have enough enforcement. This is now into your realm. Please make sure that you are overseeing this."

Misty Grimmer:

The preservation of our gaming license is invaluable. We have already had those processes and those checks in place, and the eyes on the patrons and the security systems in place, for

a long time in order to ensure that people that are under 21 are not on the gaming floor. I know the statute references checking the identification of anyone who looks like they are under 40. I think for most of our properties, that has also been our rule for the gaming floor for a long time. You mentioned people who might be 20 years old but they look like they are 25; if they look like they are under 40, we are going to come around and say, Are you sure you are supposed to be here?

Assemblywoman Hardy:

This is a bill I worked on with Assemblyman Hafen last session. As he stated, when it was going to be put into practice, there were some issues that came up, so this bill is a fix for those, specifically verifying the IDs. The people working the floor do not have a point-of-sale system or a way to check IDs on the floor. It became an issue of, we do not want to take the ID from the person, so how can we make this fix? Am I understanding that correctly?

Assemblyman Hafen:

Yes.

Assemblywoman Considine:

In reading this bill, one of the things that popped into my head is the way it is worded. It seems very much focused on the gaming areas in the resort corridor. What about the taverns or other gaming areas where you are not supposed to be under 21 to be in there? Is this part of it or is that separate?

Misty Grimmer:

It is my understanding that the reference that we cited, NRS 463.350, would apply to the gaming areas of all unrestricted licensees. I can go back and absolutely make sure that is true or perhaps Legal Division counsel can look at it. Our focus is the members of the Nevada Resort Association. I think the taverns may be in a different association, I am not totally certain, but I believe it is all of the gaming areas where gaming takes place with an unrestricted license.

Assemblyman Orentlicher:

Following up on Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch's question, your answer was, it is not that we will not have enforcement, it would be from the Gaming Control Board rather than the Attorney General. I know the Attorney General does audits to see if people are really complying. What kind of audits does the Gaming Control Board do to make sure there is compliance with the age restriction on the floor rule? Do they send undercover sting operations to see if they are really policing properly?

Misty Grimmer:

I will have to get back to you with specific statutes, but I know they do come into the properties and verify that we are not allowing underage people on the gaming floor. As Assemblyman Hafen also testified, the Office of the Attorney General has their own operations where they come in and make sure that for the sake of the smoking requirements,

they also are making sure people are not in restricted areas. We also are working very closely with the Attorney General's Office on the bill they are going to bring before you, Assembly Bill 53, because we one hundred percent support them in being able to increase the enforcement of the underage tobacco laws and slap the hands of the individuals who think they can just pay that fine because it is no big deal.

Chair Miller:

We do have some clarification from legal counsel as well.

Bradley A. Wilkinson, Committee Counsel:

The way this is phrased, it refers to any premises where any licensed game is operated or conducted. It is not necessarily limited to nonrestricted licensees, although it does say in a casino, so that may be something that needs to be clarified because it does not seem to be limited to just nonrestricted licensees.

Misty Grimmer:

I appreciate the clarification. If we do need to limit it, then we can clarify that it is only to unrestricted licensees.

Assemblyman Hafen:

We are happy to sit down with the Attorney General's Office to get that clarification and ensure that we are not back next session clarifying another definition.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

My question just came up during the exchange with Mr. Wilkinson and talking about nonrestricted and restricted. My understanding is that the reason this applies to the nonrestricted is because there are areas of the property that people under 21 are allowed, where with taverns, they are not even allowed to go inside the building. And am I correct that with taverns if you are not 21 or older, you cannot even enter a tavern, so the smoking issue would not apply as an issue?

Misty Grimmer:

It is not our intention for the exemption from the electronic verification to extend anywhere beyond the floor of a casino property. I think once you get into that arena, anywhere that is prohibited for people under 21, then the exemption gets quite large, and we are not advocating for that. I think for most unrestricted licensees, it does happen in the context of a bar or where you are sitting at the table and ordering your drinks from the bartender. The ease of being able to do the age verification is a bit easier than on the casino floor, where the patrons are constantly moving around and the cocktail servers are constantly moving around. Those are some of the dynamics that make it a little different as opposed to sitting in a sports pub and gambling at the counter.

Chair Miller:

Not seeing any other questions, we will move on to testimony, starting with anyone that would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 122.

Peter Krueger, State Executive, Nevada Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association:

I represent Fueling Nevada, which is a convenience store trade group. We are absolutely in support of the bill as written. It is our interpretation this would apply to a casino floor being nonrestricted gaming only. Many convenience stores and members enjoy a restricted license with slot machines. We support the bill as written, the amendment, and if legal counsel and the sponsor think that additional language to clarify the unrestricted portion is necessary.

I wanted to address very quickly and remind Committee members; Nevada does not have a law that prohibits underage youth to buy, possess, or use tobacco products. This needs to be changed. We have been before this body for years advocating for that and look forward to legislation on that. The usual argument is we do not want to criminalize the behavior. Alcohol is different—maybe—but we have even agreed a status offense would be an appropriate way to go on tobacco issues. Another thing I want to point out is something that is a new term—though the practice is old—"social sourcing." We all remember when it was appropriate for a mother or father or guardian to purchase tobacco for their underage children. That has been expanded now to include such things as an underage youth being out in front of a convenience store or other retailer and for a sum of money, asking an individual to go in and buy, which is a legal transaction. We support the bill.

Michael Alonso, representing Caesars Entertainment:

We do support the bill. There were some questions that came up that I thought maybe I could help clarify. *Nevada Revised Statutes* 463.350 talks about loitering in the casino for a person under the age of 21, and it applies to areas where there are games; there are no games in a restricted location. You can have up to 15 slot machines, but you cannot have games. I think the language is sufficient and that it is covering nonrestricted locations, because the bars, convenience stores, and other places that have restricted licenses are limited to 15 or less slot machines. They are not allowed to have games. It is kind of a nuance in the language, but it is very clear and that has been the standard for a long time here.

With respect to the question about taverns, taverns generally mean there is food being served. They are not just bars, so minors are allowed in taverns. They are not allowed into gaming areas; they cannot sit at the bar. But they are generally allowed—even if there are slot machines—to be in a tavern. We did not intend for taverns to be covered because of that reason. I am happy to try to answer any other questions that may come up.

Chair Miller:

I will go ahead and open testimony for anyone in opposition of Assembly Bill 122.

Caitlin Gatchalian, Nevada Government Relations Director, American Heart Association:

On behalf of the American Heart Association, we oppose A.B. 122 because of the provision to not check IDs when offering to sell tobacco products in an area within a casino where loitering by persons who are under 21 years of age. Nevadans expect our casinos to set standards for best practices when it comes to limiting youth access to adult vices. Requiring

IDs is one way to ensure youth do not get access to tobacco products in a casino. Currently, people who enter the casino do not have to get their ID checked unless it is strictly a 21-plus casino. For this reason, there is no way to tell if someone is not 21 unless you do an ID check. This policy would reduce barriers for kids accessing tobacco products in casinos. Additionally, this policy would not be in alignment with our national best practices for reducing tobacco sales to minors. Thank you for your consideration.

Lea Case, representing Nevada Public Health Association:

We are also in opposition to [Assembly Bill 122](#) for the reasons stated by our sister organization, the American Heart Association. We just want to make sure that youth are not able to access tobacco products, no matter where they are. I think, as Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch mentioned, there are kids who enter casinos who may look older. We just want to make sure that youth are getting carded and making sure they are not accessing tobacco products at that young age.

Chair Miller:

Is there anybody that would like to testify in neutral? [There was no one.] I will close the section for testimony. Assemblyman Hafen, would you like to make any final remarks?

Assemblyman Hafen:

I know there was some opposition, but I believe the opposition was opposed to scanning the IDs in the last legislative session because it just clearly did not go far enough. I understand their position, as they want to ban cigarettes. This is trying to address a different issue. This is trying to protect the youth, and having our enforcement agencies utilize their time, efforts, and energy in the best manner. I do respect the opposition, but I do think that this is one step closer to their ultimate goal of trying to prevent youth from smoking.

Chair Miller:

I will go ahead and close the hearing on [Assembly Bill 122](#). The next item we are taking, again out of order on our agenda, is a bill draft request (BDR) introduction. Before I introduce it, I want to remind members that with a BDR introduction, all we are voting on is for it to be submitted to be turned into a bill. I would like to introduce BDR 5-321.

BDR 5-321—Revises provisions relating to the protection of children from commercial sexual exploitation. (Later introduced as [Assembly Bill 183](#).)

I will entertain a motion to introduce BDR 5-321.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BILBRAY-AXELROD MOVED TO INTRODUCE
BILL DRAFT REQUEST 5-321.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MARZOLA SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

We will go ahead to our next item, which is an overview of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office.

Jason Walker, Sergeant, Administrative Division, Legislative Liaison, Washoe County Sheriff's Office:

With me today are Mary-Sarah Kinner and Chief Deputy Solferino. We will be presenting an overview of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. Speaking of Washoe County, it incorporates the two major cities of Reno and Sparks and several townships: Incline Village, which is up at beautiful Lake Tahoe; and the areas of Wadsworth, Vya, and Gerlach [page 2, [Exhibit D](#)]. Gerlach incorporates the Black Rock Desert and is known as the area for the Burning Man festival. When that goes out there, if you have never been out to a Burning Man event, the art and the installations that come out of there are just absolutely fantastic. If you have not seen them, that is definitely something to see. The population of Washoe County, as I looked it up, is 499,508. That is a 1.32 percent increase over the previous year. We are roughly a fifth the size of Clark County, which is Las Vegas. Washoe County was founded in 1861. It is the second-largest county in Nevada, covering 6,542 miles.

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office's mission and vision statements [page 3]: The Mission statements are listed at the top of this page, and I will read you the vision statement. "The Washoe County Sheriff's Office strives to ensure public safety by building trust and creating partnerships within the diverse communities in which we serve. We will promote the dignity of all people supported by our words and actions through open communication while fostering an environment of professionalism, integrity and mutual respect."

Our core values [page 4]: pride, which means professionalism, respect, integrity, dedication, and equality, with our motto of "commitment to community." For 2023 through 2025, we are working on a new strategic plan, and when we select the new pillars and all that; we will definitely provide that to share with you as well.

A little bit about the Washoe County Sheriff's Office [page 5]: We provide the law enforcement services for the unincorporated area of Washoe County. We are also responsible for operating the only adult detention facility for pretrial detainees and sentenced misdemeanants within Washoe County. The agency has an authorized strength of 443 commissioned, 301 civilian, and 60 intermittent, hourly employees. The agency has approximately 422 dedicated individuals who donate their time to volunteer programs such as Search and Rescue, the Community Emergency Response Team, and the Citizen's Homeland Security Council. The Sheriff's Office's annual operating budget currently is \$131.5 million. We have over \$5 million in restricted funding such as grants and donations.

Darin Balaam is the twenty-seventh person elected to serve as the sheriff of Washoe County [page 6]. He was sworn into this office January 7, 2019, and was recently reelected to

a second term. He has over 26 years of dedicated service to the Sheriff's Office—having worked in all three divisions: Administration, Detention, and Operations. Sheriff Balaam is committed to enhancing mental health services for inmates of the Washoe County detention facility and formed the Detention Services Unit within his first year in office. Sheriff Balaam is committed to combating human exploitation and trafficking in our community. He—along with now-retired Reno Police Department (RPD) Chief Jason Soto, and Sparks Police Chief Chris Crawforth—created our Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) team within the regional teams initiative. The mission of HEAT is to combat human and sex trafficking, which plagues our community.

Out of all the photos that we removed from our presentation I figured our executive staff are definitely deserving of a photo op [page 7, [Exhibit D](#)]. Starting from the top, we have Sheriff Balaam, Undersheriff Clark, Chief Deputy Jones, Chief Deputy Ralph Caldwell, and Chief Deputy Solferino, continuing on below them. Our commissioned command structure [page 8] is one sheriff, one undersheriff, and three chief deputies over each division, being Administration, Detention, and Operations. They have five captains: Valley and Incline Patrol, Detention, Special Operations Division, Administration, and Police Accountability and Transparency. They have 15 lieutenants, who have 45 sergeants, who have 358 deputy sheriffs that proudly wear the uniform and are the boots on the street.

Moving on to authorized commissioned staffing levels [page 9]: Looking back to 2015, we were working with 423, and you can see that we are trending in the right direction. There is always the old adage that there is never a cop or a deputy sheriff around when you need them. We are working to increase our numbers: the 2022 numbers, 443; I believe; for 2023, we have authorized another 15. That would bring that up to 458 strong, which I am very proud to be representing.

The next slide [page 10] shows our agency demographics. I will just read through them: 79 percent male, and 21 percent female, 81 percent White—11 percent of whom are Hispanic, 4 percent Asian, 2.5 percent Black, 1 percent American Indian, and a 0.5 percent Pacific Islander. If you toggle between the agency demographics and the Washoe County demographics, I can proudly say, being the Backgrounds sergeant, providing information to the hiring board, people often ask me how diverse our academy is. We have 25 in the academy right now, going off of the Washoe County demographics and the agency demographics. We are hiring our community. You can see, for the Washoe County demographics [page 11] we have an approximate split—50.5 percent male, 49.5 percent female. Then working down through the ethnicities, I am proud to say the people that work for us are the people that are in our community, and I believe it helps us to police them.

Starting with our Administrative Bureau [page 12], again that is Chief Deputy Jones. He is responsible for Backgrounds, Civil Process, Community Engagement Office, Dispatch, the front desk, the Northern Nevada Law Enforcement Academy, our Office of Professional Integrity, our Records Division, Research and Development, and our Training and Compliance Unit.

A highlight that we have from our Research and Development Division: Senate Bill 176 of the 79th Session was the rollout of the body worn cameras (BWC) [page 13, [Exhibit D](#)]. We started BWCs to our Operations Bureau that year. Fast forward to 2019, we integrated Fleet 2, which is an Axon brand, into our marked patrol vehicles. We introduced the body worn cameras to our commissioned detention personnel as well in 2021. This year for a quarter 2 release, we are hoping to get Axon Fleet 3 out. A brief synopsis of what Fleet 3 would bring to us is the ease of video-based evidence dissemination and a more efficient workflow for the district attorney's office, as well as the public defender's office. This includes an Axon interview portal; and it assembles all the videos, interviews, et cetera into one complete case. When we submit our probable cause sheet, they are already asking, Where is the video? That will help us to get all that at the forefront to ease the decision-making at that end.

Another highlight of our Administrative Bureau is our concealed carry permitting [page 14]. The total in process for fiscal year 2022 is 1,326. From July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, we revoked 54, suspended 0, denied 44, and reinstated 24. Out of the ones that we processed, just a little over 2,800 were requested by a male and 1,200 requested by a female. Regarding days to process, we are currently sitting at 67. The way that it works—and do not quote me on this—they come in and we permit that, we collect their fingerprints, and we send those fingerprints to the database. Once they confirm the fingerprints, then it comes back to us. I am of the understanding that is going to become an automated response as opposed to a personal exchange. We are hoping to drop our days to process down from 67 to a more reasonable number, but we are currently sitting at 67 days to process the conceal carry weapon.

We work on a National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) for our crime reporting system [page 15]. Reno Police Department, Sparks Police Department (SPD), Washoe County Sheriff's Office, and University of Nevada, Reno Police Department worked to update the software platform, Tiburon, that we all work with. This work included building code tables and adaptation of workflows and State of Nevada-mandated training for staff. The actual transition from universal crime reporting to NIBRS reporting was August 1, 2019. We successfully met the reporting criteria to be a NIBRS-certified reporting agency in December of that year. I believe it is a less than 3 percent margin for the crimes that we are reporting out, which is a pretty stringent reporting criterion on that. Our site certification helped the State of Nevada obtain Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) NIBRS certification. The FBI transitioned from the Uniform Crime Reporting Program to NIBRS only as of January 1, 2021. The NIBRS collects much more detailed information and provides a greater analytical flexibility with crime trends and analysis.

One of our major community outreach events that I would like to highlight [page 16] is our Christmas in July. Just last year in 2022, 1,400 parents and children that have the greatest need in our community came to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office fourth annual "Christmas in July" Back to School event. During that event, we distributed over 1,200 backpacks full of school supplies and hygiene items. We fed nearly 1,400 people and gave out countless prizes for the carnival games. The record-breaking success of our annual

event was a direct reflection of the kindness and generosity of people and organizations that do what it takes to realize the vision and make a positive difference in our communities. The 2022 event was held at the Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows, Saturday July 30, 2022. Christmas in July is also mainly supported by the Washoe County Honorary Deputy Sheriff's Association and community sponsors such as Walmart, AT&T Pioneers, The Ferraro Group, Sysco, Northern Nevada Dental Health Programs, Katie Grace Foundation, and the Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows, along with Fly High Trampoline Park. The estimated cash and donations were valued at nearly \$25,000. The Honorary Sheriff's Deputies Association donated an additional \$7,000 towards their successes.

Another major community outreach event that we have is the "Shop with the Sheriff." The Washoe County Sheriff's Office and the Honorary Deputy Sheriff's Association asked the Washoe County School District and nonprofit agencies to identify children that have the greatest need in our community to participate in the Shop with the Sheriff. The 2022 Shop with the Sheriff event was the twentieth annual, taking place on Tuesday, December 6, at a local Walmart, just in time for Christmas. The Shop with the Sheriff pairs children who are referred by the school district and local nonprofit agencies with the Sheriff's Office and community volunteers for a holiday shopping spree. As in years past, we will work with our organizations to select students ages 5-12 to participate in the next upcoming event.

Lastly, I would like to touch on our No Shave Campaign. In exchange for a monthly charitable donation from October to January, Sheriff Balaam relaxes grooming standards to allow facial hair for male deputies, and female deputies are allowed to relax their hair standards. Civilians can wear sports jerseys, they can wear jeans, and since 2016 for this outreach event, the Sheriff's Office has donated over \$100,000 to a variety of deserving local charities.

The next division I would like to highlight is our Detention Bureau, which is run by Chief Deputy Caldwell [page 17, [Exhibit D](#)]. He manages our Alternatives to Incarceration, which is also our inmate assistance program; the second Judicial District Court bailiffs; our court transportation; our Detention Services Unit, our Detention Response Team, our Inmate Management Unit, along with the programs that transpire at our Detention Bureau. A few of the highlights [page 18] are obviously our Detention Services Unit as well as a medically assisted treatment (MAT) program—one of 12 accredited facilities in the United States. It also incorporates social services; discharge planners; local social services; and the advocate, grant-funded from Join Together Northern Nevada. We also have a veterans unit and various programs including Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, and anger management classes.

Some of the stats from 2022 from the detention facility [page 19]: Our average daily population is up to 1,241 inmates. Out of those, our average length of stay is up to just over 23 days—that is from January of 2022 to May of 2022. Our bookings total just a little over 16,000. The inmate cost per day varies based on the time of year. In the winter, a couple of extra blankets or a thermal cost a little bit more. We average between \$126 to maybe \$180 on the high side. They are receiving a standard of care of up to \$500 for those that are not on

a MAT program, an opioid use disorder program, or mental health program. It could range from \$500 to \$800 for standard of care per inmate, per day for the Washoe County Sheriff's Office.

The detention facility also operates a multiplex [page 20, [Exhibit D](#)]. When COVID-19 hit, courts did not stop, the world did not stop. Some things obviously changed. We set up video court connections with everybody that is out there because these people that were in our custody needed to go be seen, be heard, and have an opportunity to make bail. Therefore, we have video court connections with Sparks Justice Court, Incline Village Justice Court, Reno Justice Court, Wadsworth Justice Court, and the Reno and Sparks municipal courts, along with federal and tribal courts. There are four courtrooms; we call them the pink, green, red, and blue arraignment rooms. There are eight individual video court stations, and tablets are available for use within the housing units.

A few of the transportation statistics from the court transportation unit are shown here [page 21]. You can see pre-COVID-19—which is 2018 to 2019—we were a little over 6,000 district court appearances. COVID-19 hit, and that number dropped down to just about 3,500. Now we are trending back up. In 2022, we are up to 4,800 just for district court appearances. All other total court events, you can see for 2022, again, trending upwards at 27,000. That is moving inmates around and getting them to video court, so that unit is definitely busy moving people to make sure they make their court dates and appearances.

Next, highlighting the Operations Bureau, which is run by Chief Deputy Solferino [page 22]: He is responsible for the Detective Division, Patrol, our Major Accident Investigation Team, and Marine 9, which is our boat resource up in Incline Village. He is also responsible for our motors unit, our bomb techs, extraditions, hostage team, K-9, the interdiction task force, Northern Nevada Regional Intelligence Center, our aviation resources, our gang unit, Search and Rescue, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), as well as a couple of other regional teams. With the Dispatch—police, emergency medical service, and fire—they dispatched out 106,270 entries. Out of that, the police dispatched calls for service number is 17,080, with an additional officer initiated just under 43,000; officer initiated would be traffic stops, subject stops, park checks, and business checks. That is approximately 60,000 calls for service annually.

With our Regional Teams initiative, we have Washoe County Sheriff's Office, RPD, SPD, the gang unit, the crime suppression unit, Narcotics, HEAT, our sex offender notification unit, and ICAC, which is international crimes against children. They all fall under the umbrella, and that means that we share information regionally. It is one thing for one entity to know something, but it is much greater if all entities know the same thing, and we focus on what is important at the time.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division personnel are currently working on a stratified policing model [page 24]. Simply put, it is place-based policing, person-focused, problem-solving, and community-based all into one methodology. It is intelligence-led policing with real-time crime analytics. We have accountability meetings where stakeholders

come in and they say, Where are we at on this problem? What are we doing? Why is it not solved? Is there anything that we can do to fix it? It is not only from the deputies and the sergeants that are there. If it gets up to a chief deputy, I am not doing my job as a sergeant and my people that work for me are not doing their jobs. It is a top-down, bottom-up accountability, and I think we are working it pretty strong. You can see the top-down, bottom-up where you have the action-oriented, evaluation-oriented crime analysis products [page 25, [Exhibit D](#)]. That is how we work it. I can tell you proudly that I have not taken anything directly to the Sheriff. We try and take care of it before it gets to him.

A couple of highlights from our Special Operations Division for 2022 [page 26]: Our Search and Rescue team had 185 requests for service and 82 actual responses, and accumulated volunteer hours of just under 5,000 with a cost savings of \$333,727. Another great asset that we have is the Regional Aviation Enforcement Unit Resource (RAVEN)—or helicopters—that are out there. There were 63 requests for service and 43 responses, totaling 255 flight hours. With outside agencies, we have memorandums of understanding, and a lot of people call for our helicopter asset—it is a very valuable program.

Last but not least is our Forensic Science Division, or crime lab [page 27], which provides services to 13 of the 17 counties in Nevada and one county in California [page 28]. These services extend to the local, state, federal, and tribal agencies within these counties. The scope of their services includes: breath alcohol calibration, controlled substances, crime scenes, DNA, firearms, latent print processing, latent print comparison, and toxicology for both alcohol and drugs. In reaching out to Director Steven Johnson, I asked him to provide me a couple of highlights and he immediately came up with these—he says, Here is where we are right now [page 29]. Since 2020, they have analyzed 979 cases for controlled substances. They have assisted law enforcement agencies with implementing portal drug screening devices to reduce officer exposure to potentially harmful drugs. That is a grant for what is called a TruNarc device. Everybody can look at a bag of something and see that it is a white, crystal-like substance, and that white, crystal-like substance could potentially be lethal to you. What this TruNarc machine does is, you can get the machine close to the substance in its packaging and it gives you a presumptive identification for what it is. We can all look at it and guess that it might be one substance or the other, but what that does is it reduces an officer's exposure, so it really keeps us safe. It is nice that we have those.

Our crime lab also responded to 83 homicides in the area. They have lowered our DNA backlog by 408 cases and reduced turnaround times by 337 days—nearly a year. The crime lab has reported 694 DNA database hits. For firearms, they have reduced turnaround times by 307 days, eliminated the firearms database backlog, and reported 427 leads. They also completed 858 latent print cases and reported 157 database hits. For toxicology, they changed the drug testing policy to test for drugs even in cases with high alcohol results, sort of like a polysubstance screen on a DUI where you have alcohol based off of slow, slurred speech or odor about the person, but they are tested for that "poly" also.

That concludes my presentation. I hope that I have highlighted some of the things that I proudly serve every day for the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. I hope I answered some

of your questions that you may have. I would like to open it up, unless Ms. Kinner or Chief Deputy Solferino have anything to add.

Corey Solferino, Chief Deputy, Operations Bureau, Washoe County Sheriff's Office:

There were a couple opportunities—you probably saw me jump to the button to try to say something—but I did not want to mess up Sergeant Walker's operational tempo on the presentation. He will be replacing me after four sessions up here. I am proudly handing over the reins to Sergeant Walker to be the daily representative from the Sheriff's Office, with Government Affairs Liaison Mary-Sarah Kinner.

I just wanted the opportunity to thank you guys for everything that you have done for me in my career. I learned a lot by modeling policy, by sitting down, having difficult conversations with each and every one of you on how we actually try to combat crime and how we try to be better community partners in our region. I can say unequivocally that Sheriff Balaam and the men and women of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office are proud to do that. We have tried to be progressive; we have tried to be trendsetters in that area.

Obviously, we do have some very concerning decisions to make moving forward with our issues with the overcrowding jail population. Our capacity is at its max at about 1,300. You see that we are hovering around the 1,200 personnel range on a daily basis. Court times are increasing, as far as being able to get our people to court and being able to get them out of custody. The mental health hearings—those are competency hearings—are troublesome; in order to get our people into the counseling services they need, in getting the clearance that they need to be able to get out of custody and thrive and get the services they need. The Detention Services Unit that Sheriff Balaam created is truly one of the best resources that we have done in the last five years by being able to have a discharge plan or social workers on site and giving these people the services they need so they do not come back. Having those wraparound services is imperative to their success. Obviously, we would much rather them thrive on the outside than have to be residents of 911 Parr Boulevard. I am happy to be here and happy to answer any questions you have. Thank you.

Chair Miller:

I will confirm that Sergeant Walker has already done a tremendous job since Day One of meeting with us, familiarizing himself, and introducing himself to everyone here. We appreciate that during this transition. We have a number of questions.

Assemblyman Gray:

I have a question regarding concealed carry with the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA). I have received complaints from different retired officers from throughout the state. I do not know if you are doing this—but I want to find out and get to the bottom of it—some agencies are requiring more than what LEOSA requires to carry. Some are requiring annual qualification with the retiree's agency of record, which would be burdensome. Some are requiring annual letters of good standing. Are you involved in that?

This may be a better question posed to the Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association, but are you guys requiring anything above and beyond what LEOSA requires?

Jason Walker:

I would have to circle back on that. I do not believe that we are. I work on that side of the house and have not heard any issues in that area coming from them.

Assemblywoman Newby:

On the forensics effort, slide 29 [Exhibit D], you presented that turnaround times on DNA and firearms and other areas have decreased by a significant amount, but those are still pretty long times. What is your turnaround time right now for some of these testing issues, and what is the status in RPD's participation in forensics?

Corey Solferino:

I hate saying the word backlog. Backlog is not a true and accurate representation. A lot of these were unprocessed cases. For whatever reason, they were not sent for processing. At one point in time when we worked with then-Majority Leader Theresa Benitez-Thompson regarding the backlog of DNA cases for forensic testing, we tested everything in our repertoire. There may have been a host of reasons why we did not process those, whether it was recanted, whether it was an admission of guilt, or whatever other reason. We ended up taking a lot of these cases and farming them out to the FBI laboratory in order to get a DNA profile. With that, we allowed our Forensic Science Division to hire additional resources and get those processed. The exact turnaround time as it is today, I will get with Director Johnson and get those records to you as soon as I get back to the office.

With RPD's processing, what they ended up doing is, rather than hiring our services and having our forensic investigators respond to those crime scenes, they are creating their own forensic investigators. They still have to utilize our lab for the processing of said evidence, but they are hiring their own forensic investigators and training them up to that standard, but they will still be using our crime lab for the analysis piece.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

In regard to the RAVEN helicopter—I am curious because I do have several rural counties in my district—are there times where, even though you are Washoe County, the RAVEN helicopter is available to other rural counties as well when they have a need?

Jason Walker:

Absolutely. We are in contact with them at any time of the day. Other than weather-based issues when the helicopter just cannot get up, it is a resource available to them when it is available.

Assemblywoman Considine:

I have some questions about the drug screening devices. That seems wonderful. What I am wondering is, are they portable? Are they in each vehicle? How many are there? Also, is it a full screening or are they limited to what they can detect?

Jason Walker:

The TruNarc device is probably in a 13-inch by 13-inch case. We have two of them assigned to the sergeants; if a deputy is out on a scene and they are unsure of what they have, they contact the sergeant. Sergeant says to hold on a second, pump the brakes, and the machine comes out to them. It is a handheld device; it just puts out a presumptive identification by going through a series of analytics, and it will just pop up with what it says. It is not like a field test kit where you are shaking and agitating different things and you are trying to determine by color; it tells you something on the screen. Oftentimes, it will say the substance is undetermined, and at that point we do not know what the substance is, but I think it is better safe than sorry, specifically with the fentanyl that is out there. Our number one thing is officer safety, so that TruNarc goes out to the scene. We have two of them assigned to patrol.

Chair Miller:

I have a follow-up to that because I actually have a similar question, but my question was more specific to you saying that it is presumptive and tells us what it believes the substance is. Is there any way for it to calculate the percentage of—as you mentioned—fentanyl? If something is cut, do we know what percent?

Jason Walker:

I do not have an answer to that. I can definitely circle back on that. The TruNarc machine comes with a series of directions that I can certainly get that information on. I do not believe so, to answer your question, but do not quote me on that. I will circle back with you on that.

Corey Solferino:

Just to give a little bit more detail on that, it will give a presumptive, so it is not used in any criminal evidentiary-type notification. It is more of a presumptive for the officer, so we know how to handle it in the field. If there are any trace amounts, it will not tell us to the degree of what it actually is but allows us to react appropriately in order to outfit our officers with personal protective equipment, handle the substance, package it, and then get it to the lab and say, Hey this has trace amounts of fentanyl or methamphetamine or heroin; use caution. To Sergeant Walker's point, the field test kits of yesterday, where you used to crack vials with glass and then add some product and shake them up, obviously have a host of issues with exposure to our officers. Like Sergeant Walker said, our biggest priority is protecting our officers and making sure they are not ingesting any harmful substances.

Chair Miller:

I appreciate that clarification. It is really just for safety for the officers. It is not admitted as evidence into any court proceedings. Thank you for that clarification.

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:

I wanted to dig in a little deeper when you talk about your detention population. Do you have any breakdown of what those folks are in there for—the level of crime? Are there minor infractions or are these higher level? Can you break that down?

Corey Solferino:

I am glad you asked that question, and I apologize because it is probably going to be about another week and a half before I have that information. I was hoping to have that to you today. We have a robust, about a 70- to 80-page state of the Sheriff's Office annual report that is actually sitting on the Sheriff's desk as we speak, and we will be pushing out a press release later this week or early next week. I am going to get copies for each and every one of you in both the Senate and the Assembly Judiciary Committees. That has that demographic breakdown. One of the things that I will say, unequivocally, that is bothersome, is that every person that can be out is out. We are seeing in our jail population higher levels of crime, gross misdemeanants, and felonies. A lot of the misdemeanors are out within that average length-of-stay time span. Once they do the *Valdez-Jimenez* hearing and have that bail reduction hearing or literally getting out with those service pieces, we do not have those individuals that are staying in our custody for that length of time. These are people that are literally having a mental health competency hearing that are waiting to get out of felony charges pending court appearances. A robust portion of our jail population is currently pending some sort of trial and/or competency hearing moving forward. I will get those stats to you today and make sure you get the annual report as soon as we publish it.

Chair Miller:

I also love math. It is the universal language that reveals all. As you were doing the presentation I was just calculating some numbers, and it seems like, at the low end for \$126 a day, it is about \$3,780 a month per person who is incarcerated. Then at the higher end, which was \$180 a day for wintertime, for a month it could be \$5,400. I am just putting the math out there because you all can further calculate it, and while that is in no way saying that money is not necessary or used appropriately or efficiently, it is just numbers to be aware of.

Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:

My question is about forensics. We had public defenders come in yesterday, and one of their challenges is with the drug testing of individuals. They said those tests are often qualitative rather than quantitative, so we can see an individual has these various drugs in their system but we cannot see how much, which was incompatible with our weights-based statutes. I just wondered if you could speak to the types of tests that are being done and whether it is possible for us to do that quantitative testing.

Corey Solferino:

I sat down with our forensic division yesterday for their operational brief. One of the issues with the quantitative testing methodology is a change in all of our instrumentation and the fact that you have to literally test every piece of every molecule of every gram. What we are looking for are the amounts; is fentanyl present, is heroin present, is methamphetamine present. If we go to change those styles of testing, it is my understanding, both the Clark County Forensic Science Division and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office Forensic Science Division would end up having to change their entire instrument cluster. We are not in a position to do that currently; we are looking for trace amounts. We are also looking at the turnaround times that right now are not advantageous for everybody to get results on. To test two and a half pounds of substance, or to test hundreds of pounds of substances when we are

talking about different controlled substances will take extreme amounts of time. I would be happy to get our crime lab director, Steven Johnson, up here to give a presentation to you to talk about the differences. It is challenging, and obviously a lot of the things that drive our decisions moving forward, monetarily, would be a huge financial impact.

Assemblywoman Hardy:

My question was about additional spots that you have for officers. If you could just talk a little bit about it; do you still have people interested in being in law enforcement? Do you have any challenges in getting good recruiting classes?

Jason Walker:

I am the Backgrounds Unit Sergeant, so I am right there at the very first introduction of, "Hey Sergeant Walker, come and talk to this person who wants to work for the Washoe County Sheriff's Office." I bring around our flyer, I talk about the career aspect of it, some of the adrenaline junkie aspect of it, the pride in serving the community, the career, and the light at the end of the tunnel. To answer your question, we are getting more applications in currently than we can look at, which I think is very good. We just put 25 in the January academy and we are looking at another 25 for July. With retirement, I think we might hit that 25 number for every academy, and that is a regional academy. That 25 is only for Washoe County Sheriff's Office, RPD, SPD, and a couple of other agencies that are right here for the Northern Nevada Law Enforcement Academy.

As far as recruitment efforts, we currently are recruiting for females. When I first applied in 2005, then-Deputy Solferino was my background investigator; that is how far back we go. He said, "Walker, your application looks really good, but we are looking for females this time," and we are really putting a push on females right now. We currently have four that are going to be on our board for July. If we can get ten females in an academy, that would be huge for our agency. The female deputies have, I do not want to say the most difficult job in the jail, but they kind of do. A male can work in a female housing unit, but we do not search the females in intake, the female deputy has to. Their job is, in my opinion, more difficult, and because of that I would like to get as many females as I can in our academy. Again, we are looking at hundreds of applications to put the best person forward for an academy. A lot of times a field training officer program or an academy work some of those people out, but what we see and what we interview, we are trying to get the best that we can.

We are also in a great spot—and I kind of feel bad about this—but we are getting a bunch of lateral people coming in. We are hiring from other agencies; our program just looks a little bit better than other people's programs, whether it is money, or whether it is the fact that they can work in the jail. The jail is 70 degrees, 365 days out of the year. On the day that you are outside and it is 110, the jail looks pretty good. Somebody that is at the end of their career, who has done a 20-year career at another agency and they want to get their top three coming to work for the jail; come on, I have a job for you. We are in a real good position where we are hiring as much as we can, and Sheriff Balaam says do not stop.

Corey Solferino:

One thing I would like to add too, if you look at our agency demographics, we are about 81 percent male and about 19 percent female. Sheriff Balaam is big on the 30 x 30 Initiative and changing those paradigms. Predominantly, it has not been a profession for females to want to get into. We are trying to change that paradigm; we are trying to show that we are changing standards. We are looking across the board, and we are looking for a more diverse career.

My wife was an investigative assistant when I met her, when she was in the backgrounds unit for years and years. Then-Sheriff Haley looked at her and said, "Hey, how about you go to the academy—you can be doing all of these different things versus just working as an investigative assistant and making a lot more money, more benefits, more diversity for your career." She took him up on that and she has been a happy law enforcement officer for the past 17 years. It is getting out to the community. It is changing paradigms. It is getting people to understand they can do this job. She is a feisty five-foot, two-inch Costa Rican, but she can handle business, and I am scared of her. I will say that on the record. There are times that I will not take her to task at all, and neither do other people, but we are looking for those initiatives.

We are looking for the best qualified applicants. We really do have a great agency that people want to come work for right now. I get Sergeant Walker's issues with stealing people from other agencies, but we do create a family environment, we do have a good benefits package, and we do have a diversity of assignments. You see all the things that I am responsible for just on the operations side of the house, not to mention some of the things that we talked about on the detention and administrative sides of the house. We have a lot of opportunity to jump around. I have never done a job for more than three years in my entire career, and a lot of people strive for that diversity.

Chair Miller:

I would also like to follow up with a question about diversity. We are obviously talking about gender diversity, but what about diversity in applicants when it comes to race and ethnicity, religion, and all the other diversities that we have?

Corey Solferino:

Sheriff Balaam has created a number of community outreach groups from diversity and inclusion to the faith-based community; we are always out there recruiting. Whether we are doing a race symposium and encouraging college students and local high school students in the community to come and talk to us, Sergeant Walker is always there with his background people to talk about careers in law enforcement.

We realized through research that by the time that we get to students in their high school years or their college years, it is harder to change that behavior, so we need to start in the elementary schools and middle schools for recruiting specifically. Sheriff Balaam has a number of deputies that adopt an elementary school or adopt a middle school, and they go there routinely so they are that point of contact; whether it is reading at lunch, whether it is

playing games at lunch, or whether it is just being there for the kids and for the administrators to get to see what a day in the life of law enforcement looks like. We try to entice them a little bit—we are not above that—we will bring the SWAT men and women, bring the canines, and we will bring the helicopters.

We want to show them all the good things that we have to do to make that truly positive interaction with them in a safe environment, versus those evenings where we have to show up and maybe mom and dad are under the influence of alcohol. Maybe there is some domestic violence going on. We try to make those positive interactions and build those relationships so they feel comfortable coming to us, and we have seen positive returns on that.

Prior to my promotion to Chief, I was Captain of Incline Village in South District Patrol. I worked with the local school administrators, because even though they are represented by the Washoe County School District police, they had limited resources up there. We had a lot of resources that we could throw out there and developing relationships with each and every one of those administrators and principals is key, not only to our success in curbing crime in that region, but to building those relations and recruiting our fan base. I am teaching an introductory criminal justice class at the University of Nevada, Reno this year. I do tours in the jail. I do tours at the Jan Evans Juvenile Justice Center. I make them go on ride-alongs. I am recruiting from within, and it has worked out.

Chair Miller:

If there are any statistics that you could provide to the Committee, we appreciate that as well, because we support your efforts. Just like in the Legislature, we need to look like the people, and so in law enforcement, as we are striving to improve relationships in our communities, we know that is an important factor as well—to look like the people that we serve.

We will move on to the next agenda item, which is a presentation from our Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Office of Intergovernmental Services. Today, we have Director-Police Sergeant Beth Schmidt, Police Detective Adrian Hunt, and Police Detective Christopher Ries.

Beth Schmidt, Director-Police Sergeant, Office of Intergovernmental Services, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department:

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro) is one of the largest police agencies in the United States. Our mission is to provide exceptional police services in partnership with the community. We want to stress that phrase—in partnership with the community—because we recognize as a law enforcement agency, we cannot be effective working exclusively on our own. Our success can only be achieved through collaboration by building strong relationships and partnering with individuals, groups, and organizations throughout our community. We police 7,560 square miles in southern Nevada. We are responsible for ensuring the safety of 1.7 million residents and 39 million tourists who visit our community annually.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department uses commissioned officers as our lobbyists because we speak from positions of experience and knowledge when it comes to policing and corrections. As the director—this is my fourteenth year with the agency—I have served as a sergeant, a detective, and an officer. Detective Adrian Hunt is in his seventeenth year with Metro; he spent 13 years as a corrections officer with us and has been a police officer now for 4 years. Detective Chris Ries is in his fourteenth year with Metro [page 3, [Exhibit E](#)]. Our sheriff, Kevin McMahill, was sworn in last month as the eighth elected Sheriff of Metro [page 4]. Prior to becoming our sheriff, he dedicated 30 years to our organization, rising to the role of undersheriff for then-Sheriff Joe Lombardo. He retired from Metro in 2020, and in 2022 he successfully ran for the sheriff of Clark County race.

Sheriff Kevin McMahill's number one priority is to inject more humanity into our policing model [page 5]. What do we mean by that? History shows us that police agencies, cities, and counties do not improve neighborhoods by arresting their way out of the problem. If we want to improve public safety and quality of life, police agencies need to inject more humanity into how we treat the people we are allowed to serve. After all, we derive our power from our community. As an agency, we are moving away from labeling neighborhoods as problems and crime hotspots. Instead, we see them for what they are: vulnerable communities. We are asking ourselves how we, as a police department, can create dramatically different outcomes and create long-lasting relationships moving forward. Another priority of our Sheriff is the establishment of a Wellness Bureau. The intent of the Bureau is to take care of our employees' physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Our mission is to bring together police, fire, and emergency medical services with the goal of taking care of them in a profoundly different way. We believe that with this approach, we will be able to serve our community with a deeper sense of understanding and care.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is celebrating our fiftieth anniversary this year [page 6]. We were created in 1973 when the Nevada Legislature voted to merge the Clark County Sheriff's Office with the Las Vegas Police Department. Historically, most police departments are funded by cities and sheriff's departments are funded by counties. Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is a hybrid among law enforcement agencies. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is funded by *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 280. The Fiscal Affairs Committee provides oversight and approval of all Metro fiscal issues except for the detention center budget. Our budget for this year is \$1.4 billion; 35 percent of our budget is self-generated from property and sales taxes. The remaining 65 percent is split between Clark County and the City of Las Vegas based on a formula that utilizes population, calls for service, and felony crimes.

We employ 5,800 people; 4,000 of these employees are commissioned officers, 3,100 of these employees are police officers, 900 are corrections officers in our jail, and 1,800 employees are civilian [page 7]. Our overall percentage of women in the agency is 33 percent. We know this is a number we need to work on, but that includes our civilian and our commissioned. Our commissioned population of women is 15 percent.

One of our greatest challenges—unlike our friends at Washoe—is recruitment and retention [page 8, [Exhibit E](#)]. These are nationwide challenges for police departments, and that challenge for us is both on our commissioned side and our civilian side. Our civilian side includes our dispatchers, who are so critical to the services we provide. Historically, we have looked outside of our community for recruiting, and our Sheriff has said, "Let us try improving that recruitment and trying to continue within our community," and how are we going to do that? We are going to build bridges and continue to build those bridges in the Las Vegas Valley, especially in our communities of color, because we admit that we still remain challenged in filling our ranks with non-white officers and non-white employees. One of the things we are looking at is finding ways to bridge that gap between the ages of 18 and 21, because you cannot become a police officer until age 21. The goal is to take these young men and women in our community and help grow and develop both their interest in working in policing and developing those skill sets that will make them strong candidates to join our organization.

The map on the screen shows you a sense of just how vast our area is that we cover [page 9]. This map is Metro's jurisdiction. The colors break down into ten different area commands. Each area command has a captain. In addition to this vast area, we are also responsible for Harry Reid International Airport. Every one of those area commands—all ten of them—has a community-oriented policing squad and crime prevention specialists to serve their neighborhoods. Those area commands do not break down by your districts, so when you request information from us, we do have maps we can pull just for your districts. Many of you will fall under multiple area commands.

We have other bureaus and divisions that include K-9, Search and Rescue, our Forensic Lab, and our Crime Scene Investigations [page 10]. We house the Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center, which serves as Nevada's fusion center. We also have a real-time crime center that utilizes technology and real-time analytics to help solve crimes. Recently, one of our real-time camera operators located bank robbers. We had been looking for them—these bank robbers had robbed five banks in 20 days, and they were using stolen vehicles to move around the valley. One of our camera operators was able to guide our officers right into these robbers as they got out of a vehicle, and they were taken into custody without incident. This is just one example of how Metro is successfully using technology.

Our goal for 2023 is to reduce overall crime in the Las Vegas Valley by 10 percent [page 11]. Last year, our jurisdiction saw a 6 percent drop in homicides and an overall reduction in violent crime of 4 percent. Among the major cities in the United States, the average murder solvability rate is 51 percent. For those of you who told us that you like data, the disheartening part of that: in most major cities, 49 percent of those murders do not get solved. When we talk about murder, solvability rates matter, and we are incredibly proud to say that the Metro Homicide Section leads the nation among the major cities when it comes to solving murders. In 2021, we solved nearly 94 percent of our homicides in Las Vegas. Right now, investigations are continuing for year 2022, which we are currently at an 89 percent solve rate [page 12]. As those investigations are starting to wrap up, we expect the murder solvability rate to rise to between 92 and 94 percent for 2022.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department has demonstrated a continuous effort to learn and improve since the United States Department of Justice worked with us on collaborative reform in 2012. Under then-Sheriff Doug Gillespie, we voluntarily stepped up and agreed to a deep dive assessment of our use of deadly force. As a result of this collaboration, Metro is considered a national model in reducing officer-involved shootings. Our use of force policy changed then, and it is continually updated as we learn through our reviews of incidents that happened both here and nationwide. In 2014, we voluntarily participated in a body-worn camera pilot program. I personally stepped up at that time as an officer and said I will wear a camera. The result of that was, consequently, Metro became the first major police department to wear body-worn cameras as an agency.

We are consistently ahead of the curve when it comes to police reform. How are we ahead of the curve? Well, it is the way we release information to the media, including our transparency and accountability. We are the only police department in the country that releases a video with preliminary details of an officer-involved shooting. Those are done from the scene within hours, and you will see in most of them it will be the middle of the night when that preliminary YouTube video is put out. We follow that up with a live media briefing 72 hours after a critical incident.

In addition, we employ a dual-mode model of investigating critical incidents. Those are through our Force Investigation Team, which is looking at the investigative aspects of it, and our Critical Incident Review Team, which is looking at the administrative aspects of it. There is further participation from the community in this process in the form of citizen use of force review board members.

De-escalation is a critical component of our policing model. Our officers have a duty to intervene with no retaliation and we stress the importance of monitoring subjects and immediately summoning medical attention if required. We hold our supervisors accountable and we expect them to be involved in the management of our overall response to potentially violent encounters.

The Clark County Detention Center (CCDC) is one hundred percent funded by the Clark County General Fund [page 14, [Exhibit E](#)]. Clark County Detention Center is comprised of two facilities. On an average day, we house 2,800 men and women. Last year, we processed 52,000 bookings. Clark County Detention Center is a county jail, and we have been asked to explain the difference between a prison and a jail. Bear with me on this: If an individual is housed in a prison, they have been sentenced to more than a year for their crime. A jail, like CCDC, typically houses individuals who are serving less than a 1-year sentence. In the case of CCDC, most of our inmates are awaiting trial or sentencing.

The Clark County Detention Center is the largest mental health facility, largest addiction treatment center, and the largest homeless center in Nevada. We know that incarceration does not fix mental health, addiction, or homelessness. Sheriff McMahill's intention is for Metro to do as much as we can to help our vulnerable citizens, those who are struggling with mental health, addiction, and homelessness. Two months into his tenure, we are already

working in partnership with the City of Las Vegas, Clark County, and other stakeholders to solve what people claim are unsolvable problems. We know this is a heavy lift, but through leadership and partnership, we believe that together we can affect change in Clark County, but we cannot solve these problems without help from the community.

One of the hallmarks of our agency is the way we build relationships and conduct community outreach. Community engagement [page 15, [Exhibit E](#)] is a tenet of our agency. Our Office of Community Engagement promotes prevention, education, support, and redirection. Our Homeless Outreach Team's mission is to partner with community providers to identify alternatives to arrest and challenges to reduce homelessness. Some of our other outreach is conducted through youth outreach, faith-based programs, First Tuesday's, Coffee with a Cop, our Citizen's Police Academy, and our Hispanic Citizen's Police Academy.

I want to highlight what we call Metro's multicultural advisory council (MMAC). For 20 years, this diverse group of community members has listened to the public safety concerns of our community and worked with Metro to strategize on how to improve policy and policing procedures within our organization. Metro's multicultural advisory council members represent our diverse community, including Hispanics, African Americans, Asian Americans, Arab Americans, the LGBTQIA+ community, and the American Civil Liberties Union, the Anti-Defamation League, and the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People]. Some of the current challenges MMAC is helping our agency address are recruitment, mental health awareness, homelessness, substance abuse, and the reduction of youth violence and homicide.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department remains committed to ensuring all citizens of southern Nevada feel safe, supported, and proud of their police department. Thank you, Chair Miller.

Assemblywoman Marzola:

My question relates to Sheriff McMahill's priority of injecting more humanity. Can you talk a little bit more about that? How are you doing that? Is it additional training for your officers?

Beth Schmidt:

We saw officers kneel on George Floyd's neck and murder him three years ago. Many agencies took a hard look at how we were policing—we thought we made changes—then we all woke up to find out what happened to Tyre Nichols. It makes us say, how does that happen? Those are police officers who are sworn to protect. You think that things change, and what our Sheriff sees is that we must take the lead. Our agency has taken the lead on so many things nationwide that we must take the lead; we must step up and point out the obvious, that you must show humanity. You must intervene. For us, so much of this is in our policy but this is a continuing conversation.

This is a conversation at the supervisory level. Our Sheriff holds us accountable as supervisors to have these discussions with our officers and to identify someone who maybe is heading down the wrong track. We have our early identification program, which is our early warning system. Much of this has to start from the top. It is how we treat each other internally, and it is how we treat people that we police. This is what our Sheriff is saying. This is not some concept that we just expect to happen. It starts with him, it comes to me, it is our brand-new recruit. We expect everyone to inject more humanity. We all can on a daily basis, regardless if you are a police officer; we could all put ourselves in someone else's shoes.

Assemblywoman Marzola:

Have you added additional procedures, additional training, or some sort of counseling? I am trying to figure out what the difference is now versus six months or a year ago.

Beth Schmidt:

Our Sheriff is brand-new, and he is building on what our sheriff prior to this did, Sheriff Lombardo. We have so much in our policy already that spells this out, but do we see more training coming? Absolutely. At this point, it is messaging that we are working on right now. As I said, he is less than two months into his tenure and we are starting right now with messaging; this is the expectation, this is what you are being held accountable to. These are things that we are going to be incorporating into our training and into our processes.

Chair Miller:

I appreciate your awareness and I appreciate the change of culture, because it is a culture shift that is being attempted. My bachelor's is in criminal justice, and I studied at a time that was after Rodney King, and after a lesser-known individual, Malice Green—that happened in Detroit—and at the time, studying criminal justice, it was very much so from the community policing perspective, the cultural awareness, sensitivity, and de-escalation. We can ask the question, "How did we get here," or is it just because of video cameras and the ability for things to be exposed and seen at a greater level? I come from that community partnership model and want us to continue on that track.

Beth Schmidt:

For everyone that works in policing, you need to not only talk the talk, but you need to walk the walk when it comes to this. We are stepping up as leaders and as one of the largest police agencies to say that out loud, and to say, this is what we have always done, what we are telling you right now, and we are going to do it even more.

Chair Miller:

Thank you for that, because you also know there are many people in this room and watching that are more than willing to offer their levels of accountability for that.

Beth Schmidt:

We know we cannot do this alone, but we are not going to stand by and say, "Well, what are you going to do? That is the way it has been." Our Sheriff says, "No, we are not doing that." We are going to give this the best effort and the best try that we can. He is working with the whole community to do this, so we hope we can shift things starting in southern Nevada.

Assemblywoman Mosca:

When it comes to these priorities, how do you plan to measure them to show how it was enacted? I heard things like assets-based language when it came to injecting more humanity but would also love to know some other ways you plan to measure.

Beth Schmidt:

This is a very early process, and we are just starting to talk about this. One of the ways we measure is through our early identification and intervention program, and I was a detective in that unit. That is how we track people. It is very important that our supervisors are involved in that process and know what their people are doing and what their people are saying—that includes what they are saying behind closed doors—and that we address those issues. We will be looking at early identification intervention, tracking that. I also was a detective in internal affairs, and I think that is something we need to track through there—the most common complaint for us in internal affairs is interaction with the public. That is the name of our policy. That is how you talk to people and how you treat them. That is a policy that we can easily track; how many complaints we get with that.

Additionally, thank goodness for body cameras, because the body camera captures the conversation. When the body cameras first came out, there was trepidation among officers, and human beings do not like change. I thought they were wonderful. Within a couple of days, I forgot that I was wearing it and I did not change my behavior. When I went over to Internal Affairs as a detective, it was just so helpful for us. First of all, if you violated our policy, it is what it is. The policy is very clear about how you talk to people and how you treat people. That is what I am saying about treating people with humanity. That has been there. When we look at that and you violated our policy, yes, we are going to sustain you for that. Absolutely we are. We are also going to educate you, and maybe it is a situation where you did not violate, but you are heading in that direction. We are going to address that. I think those are some of the ways that we are looking at.

Assemblyman Gray:

Your homicide solvability rate—does that directly correlate with convictions, or just what you refer to the district attorney for prosecution? Then with your Wellness Bureau, going towards humanity—after spending 26 years in the military and looking at some of the incidents we have seen on television with law enforcement—I think you guys are on the right track addressing that, because if you look at the officers that are involved in these, typically they are moving up in years. I think there may be an underlying anger issue that may be related to post-traumatic stress disorder. I know we have done a great job in the military of doing that. I think you guys are on the right track.

Beth Schmidt:

Yes, when we talk about our solvability rate, it means that we have submitted the case. Regarding your other statement, we were talking about this yesterday with my detectives and we were talking about when we all started in policing, nobody talked about mental health. No one talked about it. For our officers, it is covered one hundred percent to go and see a therapist, and everybody under your roof can go and see a therapist, whether they are your roommate or your girlfriend. What we see is this change within policing that we are talking about, the cumulative trauma. Does cumulative trauma play into this? I think we are going to see some very interesting academic studies as we move forward. Anecdotally, yes. I think, how does it not affect people to see this day in and day out? However, it does not excuse behavior.

Chair Miller:

Thank you for that acknowledgement. And I would like to follow up on that question about officers and the ability to seek counseling and seek services. We understand that it is covered by their medical insurance, but traditionally—just like in the military—oftentimes officers may be reluctant to seek those services covered through their medical insurance because of concerns of privacy and what will be reported. Does that prevent my raise or my promotion? Of course, we all support the idea of our officers getting the support and help they need, but has that continued to be an issue? What is the department doing to support that?

Beth Schmidt:

As I said, when I started, nobody talked about it. This is a second career for me; I spent 20 years as a journalist. I spent 20 years up close talking to people. I had never seen the things that I saw in that first year and as it continued. In my experience, our officers are not afraid to get help because what happened is, we have changed the culture over the years. During the time of Sheriff Lombardo, we really changed that culture, which was that it is okay to have that conversation with another cop and say, "Oh my God, I had nightmares last night of how it could have gone." Everybody wants to go home at night, but you wake up in the middle of the night, and in my experience, three nights in a row after I experienced something—that is really dangerous. The culture shifted in the last decade, for sure. That sense of worrying that the department is going to know what therapist I saw, I do not care and other people do not care.

I think the larger concern is we have police employee assistance programs. It is a bureau that we have, and it is officers that fill those spots, or employees that fill those spots, and they are specially trained. They do not do the therapy, but what they do is connect our officers with the therapist. That is something that Sheriff McMahill is very insistent on—making sure that everyone understands that this is a confidential process, the department is not involved. We may know which therapist they are going to; if they have been in a critical incident, they have to go to a therapist. We also offer that therapy to family, to wives, and to children because we know the effect that this has on a family when an officer is involved in a critical

incident. I think we are trying to message that out internally. Again, walk the walk and talk the talk; we have to earn the trust of our employees. The intent is for our folks to retire after 20 or 30 years, be mentally sound, and have a good life after that. That is our intent, and you cannot have it hanging over people's heads that you might be talking to the therapist.

Adrian Hunt, Police Detective, Office of Intergovernmental Services, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department:

I am very happy and proud that the Wellness Bureau will be up. In the last area command I worked at, we lost a female officer to suicide and I knew her personally, so it was very difficult. I have also been in an officer-involved shooting. Sometimes it can get difficult. But what I do love about Sheriff McMahill is, what he is trying to bring to this Wellness Bureau is a private entity, a third party, so that we do not have to see, you know, coworkers and constituents. I think that is going to be great for us as well.

Assemblywoman Considine:

I wanted to ask if Metro has these portal drug screenings, these TruNarcs. If you do, could you tell me approximately how many and what they are being used for?

Beth Schmidt:

To my knowledge, no, but I am going to confirm that. There was a time several years ago we did look at bringing in some sort of a mobile device like that to test drugs. That was a pilot study, and we ended up not moving forward with that. At this point, our concern is that we still continue with our regular process, and our most important thing is, we do that in a controlled environment. If someone is arrested with drugs and we are going to charge them, we will bring those drugs into a controlled room in the Clark County Detention Center. If we take the drugs and we are not arresting at that point, that controlled testing will go on at the area command. To echo my colleagues from Washoe County, our concern with fentanyl is exposure to our officers and them getting sick. To the best of my knowledge, we are still continuing to test as we have out in the field, and those are the preliminary tests.

Assemblywoman Gallant:

Just to give you a little background, I am a property manager, and a couple of years ago I started managing multifamily housing and found out it is a totally different beast, particularly in pocket areas. At one location—it is surrounded by a bunch of buildings—we had two of them, and over the last couple of years we have been very consistent in working with Metro and doing gates around the buildings, fixing them up, having pride, working with you guys and wraparound services. It took a lot of effort and work with us being there on a daily basis. I know it is a huge resource drain because—you know those areas—they tend to call the police department and the fire department for every little thing when it could be dealt with through other agencies. I am wondering if you have taken a look at some best practices because you cannot do this alone, you need the help of landlords in the community, especially in those multifamily units, so that you know those areas can be safe and a good place for everyone to live.

When we took it over, we had gangs squatting in some of the units; they were harassing and abusing our veterans with Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs supportive housing, taking their social security—we had attempted homicide, we had a suicide, and now the place is doing 75 to 80 percent better to the point where we get prayers every morning and thanks from the tenants. In terms of what we have seen with our success rate, have you looked at it, and is there a way we could possibly help other landlords to have that same success?

Beth Schmidt:

There is so much to unpack in there, so I am probably going to miss some things. What I want to say is, I ran our community policing effort in the Downtown Area Command, which is Fremont Street and then all around to the east, the residential neighborhoods. I am so happy to hear that because what you are explaining is what is called our "Crime Free Multi-Housing Program." We can walk in and tell the property manager what that program is, but that property manager and their owners, they have to buy into it and it takes a lot of work on their part. I am very pleased to hear how that has worked out because that is exactly what we are referring to when we say a vulnerable community. Every single person deserves the right to rest their head and feel safe at night. Everyone deserves the right to have their child be able to go out and play. We have had a lot of success with these programs, but it only works if we get the buy-in from not just the managers, but also from the community. We used to have just the crime prevention in each area, and we now also have a more headquarters-based group as well, which is our Office of Community Engagement. They are constantly looking at best practices. They are constantly looking at partnerships with the community, and that is everything from faith leaders to caregivers, to all the different aspects of the county. So yes, that is the tip of the spear for us because we know that if we can improve the quality of life and reduce the vulnerability of a neighborhood, it will grow out, and then we will continue from there.

Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:

I have a request that does not require a lot of detail now, but I would like it if you could provide us with some information and demographics regarding who is applying and who is being hired within your organization.

Beth Schmidt:

We absolutely will. I did talk about recruiting; recruiting is one of our big problems right now, one of our big challenges. I absolutely will get you those numbers. It is foremost on our Sheriff's mind, not just our recruiters. In fact, we have been told everyone is a recruiter. Our officers are going around every day at events, and we are interacting with people and trying to tell them what a great organization we are. If they do not want to be a police officer, we tell them that we have all these other things and we talk to them about that. We will provide that to you.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

Regarding solvability, that statistic is very impressive, especially when you give us a reference point for some of the other departments in the United States. What do you attribute that to? Why is there such a difference? What is it you are doing that is giving us that kind of return?

Beth Schmidt:

First and foremost, there is a culture in our investigative units which is to care to remember that this person who was murdered as a victim of violent crime, that they are someone's child. They are potentially someone's parent. They are someone's niece, nephew, grandparent. Our homicide unit never forgets that. We have what is called our major case protocol when we have a big case that we need to solve right away. A perfect example was the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* journalist; all hands were on deck for that in a very coordinated process. The commitment is that everybody is expected to go all hands on to solve that crime because that is someone's child. You talk about injecting more humanity; no one injects more humanity than those homicide detectives and the hours they work, and when things happen, they will work 72 hours straight because they want to solve that crime. To have solvability rates in the 90 percentile is something we are incredibly proud of those men and women for.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

I am curious as to solvability versus conviction, and from conviction to maybe overturned, because we might have solvability here, but then down the pipeline, how many of those cases ended up being convictions or they were convictions, but then they were overturned. If I could just get that offline at some point for myself and the other members.

Beth Schmidt:

I will. Would you like to see a few years or what would you like to see for that?

Assemblywoman Hansen:

Maybe a couple of years. I do not want it to be super intensive for you. I know you have a lot of very important things to do—just to give us a general feel what that looks like from solvability, to conviction, and then post-conviction, whether any are overturned.

Chair Miller:

I would say maybe 2017, because we always have a year or two in there with the pandemic that we are not sure how it has skewed things yet. We know numbers are different for all human-related issues, so maybe a few years. That would probably be sufficient. Not seeing any additional questions, I want to thank you for your presentation and for your candor.

We will move on to our final agenda item, which is public comment. [Public comment was heard.] We will begin tomorrow again at 8 a.m. and we have a number of items on the agenda. With that, this meeting is adjourned [at 10:15 a.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Garrett Tamagni
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Brittney Miller, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is a proposed amendment to Assembly Bill 122, submitted by Misty Grimmer, representing Nevada Resort Association.

[Exhibit D](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "Washoe County Sheriff's Office," dated February 16, 2023, presented by Jason Walker, Sergeant, Administrative Division, Legislative Liaison, Washoe County Sheriff's Office.

[Exhibit E](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "Presentation to Assembly Judiciary, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department," dated February 16, 2023, presented by Beth Schmidt, Director-Police Sergeant, Office of Intergovernmental Services, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.