

MINUTES of the NEVADA COMMISSION ON TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023

**Commissioners:**

Carson City:

Lt. Governor Stavros Anthony  
Edward Estipona (late 4:06PM)  
Charles Harris  
Jane Moon  
Rick Murdock

Las Vegas:

Donald Contursi (late 3:06PM)  
Jill Lagan  
Rafael Villanueva

Audio Conference:

Claire Muñoz  
Bob Stoldal

Absent Excused:

Steve Hill  
Tom Lester  
Brian Wadsworth

**Staff & Guests:**

Brenda Scolari (speaking)  
M.E. Kawchack (speaking)  
Kelly Benoit (speaking)  
Anton Eckert (speaking)  
Kyle Shulz (speaking)  
Angie Mathiesen  
Ron Webster  
John Bridges  
Michael Dayton (LG's office)  
Harry Ward (DAG)  
Jarrod Lopiccolo (Noble Studios)  
Kimberly Pedego (Noble Studios) (speaking)

**Others:**

Lori Bagwell (Public Comment)  
David Peterson (Public Comment)

ANTHONY: All right. Good afternoon, everyone. I would like to call the order the quarterly meeting of the Nevada Commission on Tourism on March 8th, 2023, at three o'clock. And the good news is we're meeting in person after a few meetings that we didn't. So, I'm glad to have everybody here and I'm glad to have everyone down in Las Vegas. So, just to confirm that the meeting was noticed and posted properly, correct?

BENOIT: Yes, the meeting was noticed and properly posted.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. Just a friendly reminder for everyone to identify themselves before they speak, because this is being recorded. Thank you.

ANTHONY: I wrote that down, too. All right. Stavros Anthony has been speaking so far. Okay.

BENOIT: I'll reiterate. Kelly Benoit, for the record, and yes, it has been properly noticed and posted.

ANTHONY: Okay, great. Okay, let's do the roll call, please.

BENOIT: Absolutely. Lieutenant Governor Anthony.

ANTHONY: Here.

BENOIT: Commissioner Estipona. Absent. Excused. Commissioner Harris.

HARRIS: Here.

BENOIT: Commissioner Moon.

MOON: Present.

BENOIT: Commissioner Murdock.

MURDOCK: Here.

BENOIT: Now we have in Vegas, Commissioner Contursi. Okay. Absent and excused. Commissioner Lagan.

LAGAN: Here.

BENOIT: Commissioner Villanueva.

VILLANUEVA: Here.

BENOIT: And two on audio conference. Commissioner Munoz.

MUNOZ: Here.

BENOIT: And Commissioner Stoldal.

STOLDAL: Present.

BENOIT: We have a quorum.

ANTHONY: Very good. Again, Stavros Anthony. Item number B is public comment. This is time for public comment. The public comment is three minutes in length, and public comment during the first public comment period will be for any items that are currently on the agenda. There'll be a second public comment period at the end of the agenda if you want to talk about anything outside of the

agenda. So, please come up to the podium, state your name and what agenda you want to speak on. And you have three minutes.

BAGWELL: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Lori Bagwell, mayor of Carson City, and I'm going to speak to agenda item H on your adventure centers. And I want to start with just a big "thank you" for selecting Carson City as one of the sites, and I promise you we'll make good use of it. I hope to be able to utilize it once it's built as a place for Move with the Mayors events. I can't think of a better outdoor area to get people excited about moving, using our trails, using all of our outdoor recreation facilities. And I just want to encourage you. I know it's discouraging to see prices come in a little higher than anticipated. We call those same public works estimates, and we don't always like them either. But I'm super appreciative of your support for the Adventure Centers and hope we can make you proud as a site in Carson City. So, just wanted to give you a shout out. Thank you.

ANTHONY: Thanks for coming down, Mayor. Appreciate it. Anyone else who would like to make public comment on a specific agenda item?

PETERSON: Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor and fellow commission members of the Tourism Commission. I'm David Peterson for the record, and I'm the executive director with Visit Carson City. I'm also the chair of the Reno-Tahoe Territory, so I kind of have two hats on for two agenda items, H for the Adventure Centers, and then J for the Strategic Planning and Development money for the territories. So, I would echo what the mayor said to you, Lieutenant Governor. Carson City, I think, is a wonderful location for the center, as is Boulder City. We have a lot of research that shows us being this great center point for your Northern Nevada visitor experience. And we really look forward to the center being here. I think we have amazing trails. We've got open space, you name it, outdoor attractions everywhere in this region. So, to put the numbers in perspective, I'm a numbers guy. So, for Douglas, Carson City, Storey, and Washoe counties visitor spending in 2021 was \$3.7 billion. Recreation, which does include outdoor, plus arts and culture, was \$482.7 million, or a little over 13% of that visitor spending number. So, I think that shows how critical this center can be, not only for us, but obviously for Boulder City, as well. So, I thank you, Brenda, the commission members for your foresight and careful consideration of the request in front of you to be leaders in the evolution and expansion of the outdoor recreation economy here in Nevada. Obviously, selfishly, Northern Nevada for us. And then if I can, just briefly, on J. I'm speaking on behalf of my fellow territory chairs. So, we have six territories. I just want to say I love the idea of the allocation of money that is put in front of all of you to do some strategic planning and development on behalf of those territories. I think it's a great opportunity to make sure we're aligning ourselves with what you all are doing as Travel Nevada, the Commission on Tourism. But also I think it's an important opportunity to assess for some of our smaller territories, not geographically, but in terms of their membership, looking at what their membership looks like moving forward and having some succession planning as well on their respective board. So, thank you.

ANTHONY: Okay.

PETERSON: And with that, I'll conclude.

ANTHONY: Thank you very much. Any other public comments? All right. I will close public comment. Again, it's Stavros Anthony.

WARD: Excuse me, Mr. Chair. For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. May we check with staff to see if we received any public comment via email or written before we move on?

ANTHONY: Okay. Not normally used to doing that. So, is there any other public comment through emails or phone calls, or in the South, anywhere else on the planet that would like to make a public comment?

KAWCHACK: Emmy Kawchack for the record. I did not receive any public comment.

ANTHONY: Okay.

KAWCHACK: I would like to also note for the record, Donald Contursi is here.

ANTHONY: Okay, great. I will now close public comment. Again, it's Stavros Anthony. We're now on item number C, for possible action approval of the minutes of the December 8th, 2022, meeting. In the past, when I'm not at a meeting, I don't like to vote on them, so I'm going to abstain on voting on these minutes, and I will ask my commissioner to the right, Mr. Murdock, to make a motion.

MURDOCK: Rick Murdock, for the record. I'd like a motion for the minutes for the Nevada Commission on Tourism meeting Thursday, December 8th, 2022.

ANTHONY: Is there a second?

HARRIS: Second.

ANTHONY: Okay. We have a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

ANTHONY: And in the South?

BENOIT: Three ayes.

ANTHONY: Okay. Any nays? Okay. Motion to carry unanimously. Thank you.

WARD: Mr. Chair. For the record Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. It did carry unanimously with those present. I'm just clarifying. And for the record, you did abstain.

ANTHONY: Yes.

WARD: Just want the record clear.

ANTHONY: Okay.

WARD: Thank you.

ANTHONY: Thanks.

WARD: But it did pass.

ANTHONY: Yes. All right. We're now on item D, which is discussion only welcoming and opening remarks. And I will turn this over to Director Scolari.

SCOLARI: Good afternoon, everybody. For the record, Brenda Scolari, Director of Tourism and Cultural Affairs for the State of Nevada. I just want to welcome everyone, echoing the Lieutenant Governor, our first in-person in quite some time. I thank you for braving the weather to get here. Commissioners in Vegas probably didn't have to go through horizontal snow to get to that location, but I want to thank everybody, and I want to so welcome Lieutenant Governor Anthony to his chairmanship of the commission. All of us at Travel Nevada look forward to your leadership and advocacy on the part of the industry. So, welcome. I also want to welcome Allie Anderson to the Travel Nevada team. She joins us this February as our Social Media Specialist, so she'll be handling all of our consumer facing social channels. And I don't believe Allie's in the room. I think we made her work instead, but Allie is very welcome. And that is all for that item.

ANTHONY: Okay. Thank you. Again, Stavros Anthony. We're now on agenda item E, which is for discussion-only introduction of two new commissioners. And we have two new commissioners here. They are both

in the South, correct? In Las Vegas, we have Rafael Villanueva. Mr. Villanueva is the Managing Director of Beyond Global Solutions, a tourism marketing consultant that specializes in the development of strategic and domestic international inbound marketing programs and event management. Prior to his current position, Mr. Villanueva had a successful 22-year tenure at the LVCVA, where he developed an international vision and strategy that spanned 15 countries. His extensive career also includes positions in advertising and public relations in the Las Vegas resort and casino industry, both on the client and agency side. So, thank you for joining us, Mr. Villanueva. Is there anything else you would like to add?

VILLANUEVA: No. Thank you. For the record, this is Rafael Villanueva. It's a pleasure and honor to be part of this group. Born in Mexico, raised in Las Vegas. Been in love with the city and the state all my life. Didn't realize how important tourism was till I worked for the LVCVA and understood how valuable it was for everyone who lives in our city and our state. And I'm excited to support and help as much as I can.

ANTHONY: Thank you. And, Mr. Lester is not here, correct? Just to confirm. Okay. So, also a new commissioner is Tom Lester. A longtime partner of Travel Nevada, Mr. Lester has spent two decades with the Elko Convention and Visitors Authority, currently serving as their tourism and marketing manager. Prior to his tenure, he also has spent his career entrenched in the hospitality and gaming industries in Florida and Colorado, as well as Nevada. Mr. Lester is chair of the Cowboy Country Territory and has served on the Elko Arts and Cultural Advisory Board, Carlin Equestrian and Event Center Board, and Elko Chamber of Commerce Board. So, welcome Mr. Lester as a new commissioner, and we look forward to having you at the next meeting. And, again, my name's Stavros Anthony, and I'm honored to be your new Lieutenant Governor and the chair of this tourism commission. Just so everybody knows my background, I'm a 29-year veteran of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. I served three terms on the Las Vegas City Council. So, I do have some background in tourism because we have downtown Las Vegas, and we've done a lot to really promote downtown Las Vegas. But I am not the experts that are up here on the dais and the people down in the audience. You all are the experts. But my primary focus as Lieutenant Governor when I get out of the legislative session, because I'm the president of the Senate, so I focus on not just tourism, I really want to focus on promoting tourism in the South and the North and the rurals. Whether it's our locals traveling around Nevada, whether it's outside our state or whether it's around the world. And I very much appreciate hearing your expertise in the tourism area and working together as a team up here, and a team with Brenda and all her folks to do some great things, at least in the next four years as I'm Lieutenant Governor. We'll see what happens after that. So, I really appreciate all of you. You're volunteering your time. I know you get paid a lot for being up here, <laugh>. So, thank you for being commissioners, and Brenda, everybody talks great about you. So, I'm glad to have you as a director. And we will hopefully have our final commissioner vacancy filled in the next couple weeks. I've talked to Governor Lombardo, and he has some folks he's looking at, and so we'll hopefully have the full commissioner set up here very soon. Thank you for all of you in Las Vegas. I'll be down there this weekend for one day and then back up to run the Senate. So, thank you for everything you do. So, all right. That brings us to item F, which is possible action on the nomination of a vice chair. Again, this is Stavros Anthony, and I thought about who a good person would be to be vice-chair, and really everybody on the commission would be an excellent vice-chair. I did, however, sit down with Mr. Murdock and asked him if he would like to be the chair, and he said he would be honored to do it and willing to do it. Mr. Rick Murdock has been a prominent figure in Nevada tourism for over four decades through his career at Caesar's Entertainment the Row, currently serving as the company's vice President of Government Affairs. He has twice served as chair of the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority and is a current board member of the Regional Air Service Corporation, the Capital Projects Surcharge Advisory Committee for downtown Reno, the Downtown Reno Partnership, and St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. He served nearly three years

on the Nevada Commission on Tourism. And I would like to accept the motion at this time to appoint Rick Murdock as the vice chair. Would anybody like to make that motion, or I guess I can make the motion. All right. I'll make a motion to appoint Rick Murdock as Vice Chair of the Nevada Tourism Commission on Tourism. And do I have a second? Do we need a second on everything?

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. Mr. Chair, you could do it a couple of ways. May I suggest that you nominate him, then we may have a motion to close the nominations and just have a formal election.

ANTHONY: You want it that way? Okay.

WARD: Yes, sir. That would be very easy to do that way, so I'd make that suggestion.

ANTHONY: Okay. All right. I'll pull my motion back. I want to nominate Rick Murdock as chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism. Are there any other nominations? Okay. I will close the nominations, and I will make a motion to appoint Rick Murdock as the Vice Chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism. Is there a second?

MOON: I will second that. This is Jane Moon.

ANTHONY: Very good. Thank you. I have a second. All those in favor of the motion, say aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

ANTHONY: Anyone against? Okay. Motion carries. Congratulations, Mr. Murdock. You're the vice chair. Appreciate your time.

MURDOCK: Thank you.

ANTHONY: We'll now go to agenda item G. This is up for discussion only. Director's report and budget update from Director Scolari.

SCOLARI: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. For the record, Brenda Scolari. Commissioners, you all have the quarterly Travel Nevada report in your packet. This compiles all of the activities in the previous quarter done by the Marketing and Industry Development teams. As you can see, it's a remarkable amount of activity, but I want to draw your attention to two items that I'm particularly proud of. One is the details of our Destination Development grant awards. This is our inaugural first round of our new grants for tourism infrastructure throughout the state. This first round is funded through \$2 million as part of our state EDA Tourism and Outdoor Recreation grant from the US Department of Commerce. And as you can see, those six worthy projects will undergo the Destination Development process and end up with some built environment in our rural community. So, we're very excited about that. Please, take a look at those details. We send out newsletters regularly and so when we published the Visitors Guide, the clickthrough rate on those newsletters is just remarkable. We have 27% engagement out of state and 42% engagement in state, which just speaks to the remarkable work that the team has done in engaging our residents through our Discovery Nevada Campaign and other means. Also, our Industry Development team is of course back on the road attending domestic trade shows. Also, the details of our team's work, presence, and PR done in international markets is in the report. Take a look at that. Some of the work done more recently involves a Brand Workshop. I know our Creative Agency of record is going to speak to this, so I won't go into too much detail, but I was going to thank Commissioner Estipona for being a part of that brand workshop. The entire staff got together and did some work related to determining our core values as an organization, as some of the due diligence related to our brand guidelines. And you'll hear more about that very soon. We also, in a partnership with the Nevada Department of Transportation, have created the Nevada State Map. We hoped to have them here today in the room, but thanks to the weather, we don't yet. I do have one actual map if someone wants to come take a look at it, but please look for

those. We are going to print a million maps. So, those will be everywhere soon. I had also hoped to have printed copies of our annual report. Once again, thanks to the weather, I do not. But we do have a digital report available on [travelnevada.biz](http://travelnevada.biz), which is our industry site. And I thought what I would do at the June meeting is review the annual report in detail with all of you. I will move on to taking a look at the budget. So, we always take a look at the Tourism Development Budget account. I'd like to first talk about the unusually large cash reserve. I have a plan for moving over 50% of that into expenditure categories, and I'll speak to that in just a moment. We also indicate our actual collections versus our collections authority. Our authority for FY23 is just over \$28 million. Our actual lodging tax collections, to date, are \$13.3 million. We'll next review category 31, which represents the majority of the marketing expenditures. We'd like to review this year over year, the comparison. So, of course, fiscal year 21, we were still in recovery. Our authority for expenditure was only 6 million. But this year, it is \$16.7 million in authority. Right now, we're just at 3.3 million. I'm always concerned and wonder why and then remember that our invoicing for our media expenditure always lags. So, we've only been invoiced through November thus far, and that and our grant reimbursements usually go until the end of the fiscal year. So, we won't be completing all of those reimbursements until July. So, we always expend the full amount of authority by the end of July. It looks like we have quite a ways to go, but that is why. We'll have a number of immediate invoices yet to come. Next, I'd like to discuss a bill in the legislative session. I was hoping to have the actual document in front of you. So, I have put forward, through the endorsement of Governor Lombardo, an executive bill to do some restructuring in the department. That through three elements. One of them is the absorption of the staff of Nevada Magazine. So, that's long been an issue. They, in statute, have to operate as an enterprise fund, so they have to function as a business. They've had trouble doing so, reaching adequate ad sales to achieve operations budget and meet their own payroll. So, this solution of having them be a part of the marketing team and creating a content studio that can address all of our creative needs in-house and help us manage our consultant contracts is a solution that commission in some of my prior reports in between sessions, in my reports to the legislature, in between, and then my conversations with the Governor's finance office about it. I think it is a solution that will put that issue to bed once and for all. We've been paying the magazine to create our visitor's content for some time. As such, their business model has changed, and they're now a free publication. So, that means they are in front of 200,000 plus readers annually instead of just the subscribership, which toward the end, was quite low. It was 7,000 to 8,000 people. So, I hope we're all in agreement that's a good solution moving forward. I've been in two budget hearings now in session discussing that and hope that gets approved in session. The other item relative to the bill is the creation of a Deputy of Tourism position. I'm one of the only people in state government who oversees a division and a department. So, this would allow me to have a deputy who would focus on the integration of the work of the Marketing and the Industry Development teams. I would continue to administer the federal grants. I would do sponsorship development. I think there's all sorts of opportunity to do that for our state museums, strategic and public affairs planning. There's quite a bit of that work to do and oversee the Marketing and PR personnel that are now dedicated to the cultural agencies. It also creates an administrative account, which is before you here. So, that would be a second account. Currently, all of the lodging tax flows into one budget account and all of the operations spending, all of the personnel that also do work for the other agencies in the department are there. And I'd like to separate those two. So, as you can see, we would then have lodging tax authority of 27 million, which would go to all of the transfers to the cultural agencies. We also do lodging tax transfers to entities outside, the Nevada Film Office, to state parks. I would then take the balance of the cash reserve that we noted in this year's fiscal budget and ask the interim Finance Committee to allow us to transfer half of it. We're obligated to carry a cash balance of 60 days normally, which we were quite glad we had in the spring of 2020. But since then, the Governor's finance office has increased that to a degree that we just don't need anymore. Thanks to healthy visitor and room rate numbers, I think we have a healthy

enough budget to reduce that to at least half and move about \$7 million into the expenditure category. So, what I'd like to do is review those expenditures at the June meeting. We'll come to you with some ideas about how to spend that money within this budget account, which would then increase the total revenue in it to approximately 27 million. And the expenditures, as you can see then, are just focused on and related to some of the expenditure categories that used to be in the Nevada Magazine budget account and category 31, which we just reviewed related to all of the marketing expenditures, which are primarily spent on media. I'll stop there to take any questions if there are any.

ANTHONY: Thank you. Again, Stavros Anthony. Are there any questions from any of the commissioners? We'll start with Commissioner Harris.

HARRIS: Thank you. For the record, Charles Harris. Love what you're doing with the magazine, and I see that the expenditures are looking about 330,000. What is the revenue--advertising revenue offsetting that? And does that include staff salaries, benefits, and everything else that goes into that line item?

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. The 330 was a transfer that represented our contract with the magazine to create the visitor's content. So, it was essentially a subsidy. So, we had to keep that in the budget, just in case the bill with the restructuring and the absorption of the personnel is not approved in session. So, it would be removed if it is.

HARRIS: And in terms of absorbing them, what is allocated in terms of the revenues that you expect to see to offset future publications for the magazine?

SCOLARI: You know, we really haven't set a goal. I believe their revenue goal was 50,000. But I think we'll reassess those goals. With that amount of distribution, the advertising base should expand. There's no reason it can't. This will just remove the burden of the staff having to pursue ad revenue to pay themselves. Any other questions?

ANTHONY: Any other questions from any other commissioners? Yes, Mr. Murdock?

MURDOCK: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. So, these two. One--this is the budget for the Tourism Fund, and then the Cultural Affairs budget. Right? So, you're integrating--you're waiting for an approval through the legislature to implement the other, the cultural affairs budget? Is that what you're saying?

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. Yes, that's right. So, we would separate all of the personnel operating costs, all of the lodging tax transfers, into a separate account so that 1522 then just holds all of the funding and expenditure for the Division of Tourism and Travel Nevada.

MURDOCK: Rick Murdock for the record. So, you would go to one?

SCOLARI: That's right.

MURDOCK: Thank you.

SCOLARI: It's just cleaner accounting.

ANTHONY: Thank you. Any other commissioners? Any commissioners in the South? Okay. Thank you for that report. I appreciate it. Okay. Again, Stavros Anthony. We are now on agenda item H, which is for possible action, Adventure Center proposal and funding. Director Scolari.

SCOLARI: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. For the record, Brenda Scolari. Let me just give you a little history of this award. So, in December of 2021, I applied for a U.S. Department of Commerce competitive grant for Adventure Centers. There was, as a part of the American Rescue Plan Act, the offering through the EDA of tourism related infrastructure, of which this type of project was eligible, there

was almost \$58 million available to the region in which Northern Nevada fell. But that region was far bigger than the state boundaries itself. And we were lucky enough to have this grant conditionally awarded. I then did a number of preliminary reports and was then fully awarded the grant amount of the construction estimate in September of 2022. And as a state agency, I have to work with state public works to build anything like this, a facility such as this, which makes sense. These Adventure Centers, their purpose is that they are visitor centers dedicated to the outdoor recreation experience in the region. There will be state staff on site that will address safety and best practices. We'll speak to the Recreate Responsibly message that Travel Nevada attaches to any of its outdoor content normally. But we'll be joined on site by local small businesses, such as tour operators, outfitters, retailers who will allow this to be really a kind of turnkey experience, a turnkey way to enjoy outdoor recreation in these regions. So, we'll be incentivizing the creation of these businesses quite often, especially here in the North, where many of these tours don't currently exist. They'll be job creators and I really think the strength of this concept, the reason it was awarded by the EDA is that it's an innovative public-private partnership. It's endorsed by local, state, and federal agencies. And with 85% public land in Nevada, I feel our obligation to support this burgeoning outdoor recreation economy. In 2021, outdoor recreation spending increased by 130%. So, we certainly have the opportunity to capture more of that spending and make sure those visitors return and that they've had the best possible experience. These are proposed to be container-based structures, which, as you know, there are facilities such as the Container Park in Las Vegas, the Eddie here in Reno, that are design--similar design. So, they'll be functional. They'll be well-designed by the architect and relatively inexpensive to build. We'll take a look at the funding. So, the federal award was just over 3.7 million. It was a matching grant. So, the 20% approved last June by the commission amounted to 928,000, bringing the total project cost of 4.6 million. That amount was determined by construction estimates in December of 2021. So, since then, thanks to inflation and supply chain woes, and other considerations, State Public Works now has the construction estimate at 5.9 million, which leaves us with a funding gap of 1.3 million. And in discussing this with the Lieutenant Governor, he had a really good idea, which is that we create a contingency fund to fund that gap so that the money is there. It allows me to move the project forward. I can let State Public Works create a real build-out schedule, and we can also meet the EDA's requirements in regard to breaking ground and expenditure of the project, which we have to do by November of 2027. It also allows me to continue to look for sponsorship. I think we have a real opportunity here to bring some major retailers in as sponsors of these projects. I think there are other funding sources out there for infrastructure of this type. So, I'll continue to look for that to offset this amount, which will be in contingency and a line item in our FY24 budget, but hopefully is offset by my efforts to find more funding. Can I take any questions?

ANTHONY: Stavros Anthony. Thank you for the presentation. These Adventure Centers have been approved by the Tourism Commission, correct?

SCOLARI: Correct. Yes, they have.

ANTHONY: You know, unfortunately, as Mayor Bagwell mentioned, this happens just about every single project nowadays. The costs have gone through the roof. And I agree it's important that we build these. We've committed to Carson City, and we've committed the Boulder City, and the unfortunate part is that 1.3 million has to come out of the expenditures that could be used for other things to promote tourism and cultural affairs. But I personally think it needs to be done. But we do have time to come up with other funding sources, whether it's another grant, whether it's, like you mentioned, sponsorships, whether it's donated money or things like that. So, I would encourage all the commissioners and everyone in this room to talk to folks about helping us with this \$1.3 million. And the more we reduce it, the more money we have to use for other areas of the department. And hopefully we can get it down to zero, which would be great. We have time to do that. I think we can

at least get some of it reduced. I don't know if we can get the whole thing reduced, but I think we can get some of it. So, I will now open it up for other commissioners that would like to make a comment or have any questions. I'll go to the South first. Does anyone in the South that would like to make a comment or have a question? Go ahead and please identify yourself.

LAGAN: Yes, please. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. This is Jill Lagan for the record. And I am just excited. I don't think I could be more excited about a project that we've been talking about. And obviously Boulder City is very much engaged and involved. I'll give you just a quick summary. So, I have been working on this type of facility for about 15 years. This has not been something that we have slowed down on. However, finding funding, finding the perfect location, has all been a little bit of an issue. Everything just fell into place. One of the silver linings that came from Covid, was the ability for us to find the property, happened to be renting the property, and then having the partnership with Brenda Scolari. So, I'm very grateful for the director and all of the staff for helping us put this together. And I really see some true advantages. I know that there's some concerns about that funding gap. I do agree with you, Lieutenant Governor. I do think that there are quite a few people who are more than willing to be a part of that and would love to be able to see this type of an activity come to play. And I know that I have been in contact with many as I was attempting to try to find at the time, when I applied for the EDA grant on my own once and was denied. And this is the second time around that I had the opportunity to work with the Department of Tourism. So, this chance, we know that we've got some dollars and some people who are really wanting to back this program. They see the benefits to it. So, for me, in Boulder City, we really see this as an amazing opportunity to eliminate some of the carbon footprint of the busing companies that are going to and from the center of the strip out to the rural communities and the surrounding areas where some of the outdoor recreations taking place. It provides the ability for those small businesses to be able to redirect some of those funds to other job positions instead of having to pay for fuel and for some of the expenses of maintenance. And so, just simply allowing those businesses to do things better because they're part of a larger co-op is really an amazing opportunity. And I hope more people recognize the smart way of doing business by doing something in a collaboration like this. So, I really truly believe in it. I am grateful for all the efforts that have been put forth on this. The amount of work that Brenda has done has not been lost on me. I'm fully aware of all that she has had to put together. And then having added to work with Public Works and with the state, state government, any government, it's always something that just adds some layers. And it just means we have to make sure we're doing everything right, dot our I's and cross our T's. And so, I very much support this. I can see how it'll be a true improvement and addition to the tourism outdoor recreation economy in both the North and the South. And as we have shared in the past, we know that the EDA has eyes on this project. I was able to speak to the director personally back in DC and he had made the statement that they very much are watching this project because they can see this being something that could be replicated throughout other states. So, grateful to be a part, really excited about this opportunity. Congratulations to everybody for getting us to this point. And I do want to state that, and maybe DAG Ward can give me some guidance, but I feel like I probably should abstain from any vote on this.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. I didn't hear the last two sentences about what you requested.

LAGAN: Jill Lagan, for the record. I'm just wondering if I should abstain from the potential conversation about a vote on this, simply because it will be impacting the Boulder City Chamber of Commerce that currently runs the Nevada State Welcome Center, where the Adventure Centers will take place.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. Since we will probably have enough for a quorum, I would recommend you probably abstain from it. That's the safest way to do it. You've

made a disclosure, but I still feel like that you've now made the disclosure that you would like to abstain. So, that would be my suggestion.

LAGAN: Jill Lagan, for the record. Thank you very much and I will be abstaining from this vote.

ANTHONY: Okay. Thanks for abstaining, but you made some great comments. So, thank you. Anyone else in the South want to make any comments or have any questions? You guys are good? Anyone up here want to make any comments or questions?

MURDOCK: Thank you. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. Rick Murdock, for the record. Two things. You guys are awesome. This is what it's all about to do things like this because small business needs to thrive again. And I really believe in what this department is doing. The Commission on Tourism is inviting small business back in and making it easy to do business. This is really exciting. Great job, Brenda, and for securing the funds you did find. \$1.3 million seems like a big lift, but I love the Lieutenant Governor's idea. I mean, I think that's the way you do it and I know we'll get there. This is really good for both Carson City and all the rurals to see a model like this for our state. And thank you for trailblazing.

ANTHONY: Thank you. Any other commissioners want to make any comments or any questions?

MURDOCK: Thanks, Lieutenant Governor. Rick Murdock, for the record. I will just note that I have a casino interest in Carson City but I'm not abstaining. Thanks.

ANTHONY: Thank you. again, Stavros Anthony. I'm on the Outdoor Recreation board. I'm the chair of the Outdoor Recreation Commission, so I'll bring this up there. And maybe somebody has some funding sources that they can think of to kind of help us augment this amount. So, okay. If there are no other questions or comments, I will entertain a motion.

MURDOCK: Lieutenant Governor, I'd like to make a motion. I'd like to approve the creation of a contingency fund of 1.3 million for the construction of the Adventure Centers projects between FY23 and FY25.

ANTHONY: Thank you. Is there a second?

HARRIS: Second.

ANTHONY: Thank you. I have a motion and a second. Any discussion further on the motion and a second? All those in favor signify by saying aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

ANTHONY: And we have one abstention. Correct. Okay. Very good. Thank you.

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. Lieutenant Governor, let me just say. Now that we have secured the funding and that this project will move forward, I'll make sure that all the materials related to the projects are available on [travelnevada.biz](http://travelnevada.biz).

ANTHONY: Great. Thank you very much. Appreciate it. All right. We're now on item number I for possible action. Rural Marketing grants, update sliding scale, Anton Eckert.

ECKERT: Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor Anthony and commissioners. My name is Anton Eckert. For the record, I'm the Chief Industry Development Officer for Travel Nevada. I handle rural marketing grants, the Destination Development program, our international efforts, and industry relations. So, for those of you who may not know, rural marketing grants are what we run every year. It is a statute for our industry. It's available for nonprofit organizations within Nevada. Those typically mean destination marketing organizations, DMO's, attractions and events that are all nonprofit. Organizations can apply for grants. In FY24, we will have 1.5 million in available funding. The grant

applications have already opened March 1st, and it'll close on April 28th. Following that, in May, we'll have a review of the applications internally, as well as with our Territory Advisory Committee, which is made up of chairs of all our territory organizations within the state. And then in June at the commission meeting, we will seek your approval for our recommendations around those grants. Some of the changes we've made for this fiscal year is that we are going to one cycle. Previously, it was two cycles. Personally, I always found a challenge with that. I didn't know how people could plan a whole year not knowing what they may get on the second half of the grant cycle. But this also alleviates some of the time spent with the staff and even with partners trying to apply for grants. And in lieu of that, what we've decided is that we would do a mid-year check-in, and we would probably do this in December or January to see where those applicants have landed in terms of their programs, if they need to make any switches. We do want to make sure that the grant program is flexible when it comes to marketing, as marketing should be flexible. There are a lot of things that happen that sometimes you do need to make some changes. The other thing that is new this year that we'd like to introduce is the Economic Impact Calculator and a matching sliding scale, which I'll get to in a minute. So, just to give you a summary of kind of what the rural marketing grant categories look like. We have paid advertising. That's usually broadcast, print, social media, SEM, SEO, Search Engine Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, out of home, a lot of those kind of advertisements that you have activities that you actually have to pay for. We have PR FAMs that we conduct as well as missions and some PR projects that they can apply for. Travel trade. Many of those applicants look at consumer and trade shows as well as education and training programs. We host some of those missions. So, it's certainly something if they wanted to come along with us. Organizational assets. Really looking at, sometimes they need images or assets, video assets that they can use for their own promotion. Banners and signage also kind of fall under that category. They're also allowed to apply for grants to attend conferences that are tourism related to help educate themselves, but also hosting events within their communities to, again, promote the education around tourism to get everyone up to speed. And then market research around any of the media they're doing, and/or strategic planning. So, those are all the kind of categories that we have related to the grants. The biggest challenge we have is kind of understanding what that impact is. You know, the data that we're asking for is self-reported, and it's very inconsistent. Sometimes the measures aren't really available, and applicants don't even know how to calculate. And it's not their fault. They're doing their best guess. It's just not easy to try to understand how the impact will be because sometimes the programs require multiple years of research to kind of understand what that actual impact was. So, for the purpose of this, of kind of defining or standardizing some metrics around the impact, we really just want to look at the paid advertising category. And with that, you know, events sometimes apply. That's also paid advertising that they're buying into as related to that. So, you know, one of the challenges, the biggest challenges really with the reporting that we've been doing in the past, it doesn't really tell the true impact of the grant program. And because it's a little bit inaccurate and somewhat meaningless, we're asking how many visitors come and how much do they spend. And even regardless of the project type, we're asking them, you know, we're trying to make calculations based on that. And again, it's hard when you're looking at a trade show, for example, or when you're creating images, what that impact is actually going to be. So, this is kind of our first attempt at standardizing some of these metrics. We want to focus on, as I mentioned, evaluating those paid advertising and event categories where most of the funding falls within. We can get real data from our media companies and event organizers for that. And, you know, we can help our partners by creating a formula to help them calculate what that impact could be and be a little bit more consistent. We will ask for estimates in the application process, and we will ask for actuals in the evaluation process. But I do want to load it up with a lot of caveats as part of this. It's never going to be an exact science when it comes to trying to understand what the full impact is. It's going to take another cycle or two to kind of get our little calculator in a good place that we feel confident about. We're not going to be able to use past results either because we didn't ask those

questions in the past evaluations. So, we're really looking at this moving forward and I think it'll improve with each grant cycle in terms of the more data we get in and more examples we have to run through our calculations and make sure we fine tune that. With that, I'd like to bring up Kyle Schultz, our Research Manager to explain the math behind the measurements, because I'm not the best at math. Kyle.

SCHULTZ:

Thank you, Anton. Kyle Schultz, research manager for Travel Nevada for the record. As Anton mentioned, for these impact estimates, we're going to be focusing on grants that fall into the paid advertising category generally. But we're kind of splitting these up into two different categories within that one category. So, these, as Anton mentioned, is promotion, using paid media to promote an event, a specific event in the state, or to promote a destination, generally. So, what is on the slide here are the components that go into the calculation for the economic impacts for promoting a destination in general. The first component that you see here is Paid Media Reach. So, this comprises of things like broadcast and streaming services reach, print and newspaper, magazine circulation, views of various ad content, radio reach, that sort of thing. The second kind of component is the Arrival Rate. As a bit of background on this individual component, for our own paid media, we use a company called Arrivalist to pixel our ads. And this pixeling of the ads allows us to kind of see it generally. How many people are exposed to our advertisements, how many people actually show up in the state? So, in order to give conservative estimates for these rural grants, we're assuming that the arrival rate from these grants for these rural destinations is about half of what our arrival rate is. The third component is an estimation for spending. We're deriving this from our Rural Visitor Profile as an average spent per travel party. And then the fourth kind of component to this specific calculation is the impact ratio. So, basically what the impact ratio is, is an acknowledgement that we know that we cannot take credit for all the impacts that these ads provide because we're not the sole funder of these ads. So, the calculation kind of takes into consideration the total amount of funds that we're awarding for paid advertising divided by the total budget for these specific paid media assets. So, for example, if a rural organization applies for \$2,000 worth of paid media advertising, and their total budget for that paid media advertising is \$10,000, the impact ratio would be 2,000 over 10,000. So, 20%. So, we would essentially only be taking 20% credit for any sort of impact that would come from advertising. So, here's what the formula looks like generally for the estimated economic impact of paid media. And it's basically all of those four components that we just showed multiplied on one another. As Anton mentioned, we are also trying to come up with a methodology for the economic impact of event promotions, specifically. The logic is very similar to what we just showed in the previous two slides. The only real main difference is the first bullet point. So, rather than relying on things like arrival rates or paid media reach, we're asking events, grantees who are applying for event promotion, an estimate of how many people they're anticipating travelling to the event over 50 miles. And the reason we're doing this instead of relying on paid media reach and arrival rates, is we feel that event organizers should have a decent idea, at least a ballpark figure, of how many people are attending their events and how many people are traveling over 50 miles. The other two components to this, the estimated spend and the impact ratio are very similar. Again, the actual equation for this calculation is simply just those three components multiplied together. As Anton mentioned, there are a lot of caveats to go along with this. The first is that the self-reported reach data and other self-reported data, at least initially, are going to be off because they are estimates. Because these are inputs into the calculation and they are estimates, that means the final numbers are going to be estimates and not 100% accurate just by definition. Another thing we wanted the commission to be aware of is that some parts of this formula, specifically the arrival rate, are important parts of the impact estimates. And a small change in this might have a big difference on the final estimate. So, for example, using the arrival rate, if this in one fiscal year is estimated to be one out of every thousand people arriving in the state, and the following fiscal year, it's estimated to be 1.25 out of every thousand, even though that's a small estimate, that could have a decent sized impact on the final calculation. We did want

to say though, when we used these formulas on the most recent grant cycle in FY23, the output did seem to give some reasonable and conservative estimates of the impact. So, this gives us decent hope going forward that we don't have to tweak this calculation too much, though we are going to, as we move through future grant cycles, kind of keep an eye just to make sure that the impact estimates continue to give conservative estimates on the overall impact. And the fourth and probably most important point is that this is going to be used for internal measurements only. And, as Anton mentioned, it is kind of a way for some grant applicants to have some sort of an idea of the impact that these grants are having. But this is not going to be used to determine who gets awarded a grant and who does not get awarded a grant. So, that's an overview of the thinking that kind of went behind the economic impact methodology. And I will turn it back over to Anton. Thank you.

ECKERT: Thanks, Kyle. I told you he was really good at math. <laugh>. Does anyone have any questions related to that?

ANTHONY: Okay. We have some questions.

ECKERT: Charles.

ANTHONY: Commissioner Harris.

HARRIS: So, first of all, this stuff's really hard to measure and I applaud you for working to baseline this and getting in a bottom-line economic impact. I think with all of us that work in the business, it's really tough to do, especially when you're looking at things that you cannot measure precisely. My only question is, is the formula you created something that was done in-house, did you go through Destinations International for their economic impact calculator? And if you did do it in-house, were there any other benchmarks that you looked for similar types of destinations that would reflect on how we wound up with this formula?

SCHULTZ: Kyle Schultz, for the record. To answer the questions about looking at Destinations International's Impact Calculator. Anton and I, have both been on calls with them in the past. We didn't consult with them on this. It's a good idea. We might want to do that going forward. And in terms of looking at other destination's Economic Impact Calculators, we did not do that. We looked at kind of what our previous measurements were, which we had to report to the legislature as part of our performance measures in past years. And we kind of compared what these numbers were saying versus what those numbers were saying. Those numbers just for kind of a comparison showed impacts. And these are apples and oranges comparisons because we were asking different things and they were not necessarily measuring the same thing. But the impacts were estimated to be in the hundred to 200 million range. These estimates that we kind of looked at from the last grant cycle were in the eight to 10 million range.

HARRIS: And the only reason why I suggest the DI Calculator, is because it's industry-approved. It's used throughout the country; it's really been consistent with every DMO in the country. So, I would just suggest making a call to get their input on that. Thank you.

SCHULTZ: Thank you.

ANTHONY: Great. Thank you.

MOON: First of all, I have to applaud Anton and Kyle and the rest of the team for really working so hard to streamline and make these grants consistent and being able to track outcomes are important, of course. I would ask you to continue to give us grace in the rules because, again, we need the training, which you're continuing to do, and assistance as we move forward because we don't have that big staff. There's a lot of us that are just one person teams and, so, I would just ask for grace and the continued support. But this is wonderful. I love to see it. Thank you.

ANTHONY: Great. Thank you. Vice Chair Murdock.

MURDOCK: Rick Murdock, for the record. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. You know, having been an old hotelier in that arena, some of the formulas when you do an event, is asking hoteliers to put a code in to track who spends the night. Are we good at it? Are hotels good at it? Sometimes yes, sometimes not. But especially when you're dealing in the rurals, you might be able to use what occupancy, what your hotels are or what they give you. And when you do an event, you could somehow say, did you see an impact in your hotel occupancy, in your revenue? And they could see. I mean, it's a lot of things and they're real simple asks. Hopefully, you would encourage them to say, "Hey, would you please track this for us with a booking code?" So, that's just a little FYI. And, you know, it's something easy to do. I applaud you because none of this is a hundred percent. But it's a good effort. And that's one way you can find out if all the hotels or motels in that rural community got business during that time, they might have a tracker there. Thank you.

ANTHONY: Excellent. Thank you. Any comments from the commissioners in the South?

LAGAN: None.

ANTHONY: Okay. Thank you.

ECKERT: Anton Eckert for the record. Thank you for the comments. Yes, we appreciate the feedback. We'll take any data that's out there that we can count on. It's when you need to do an economic impact on a trade show or a video, for example, which is very hard to calculate that. And like I said, it takes multiple years to kind of understand where that falls into. So, we will get there. Next up, I wanted to talk about a proposed matching sliding scale. And just to give you a little bit of context on that. So, our current match program for the rural marketing grants is 50%. When I started a year and a half ago, I conducted a grant audit. I wanted to see where the funds were going to and I looked at five years from 2018 to 2022 and looked at where the funds were going to, who was benefiting from the grants. And as part of that, I also realized there were a lot of small organizations out there who really needed more support and we wanted to make sure that we gave that to them. So, as I mentioned, the current match scheme is 50%, and that is in cash or in kind, which is the equivalent of volunteer hours. We really want to support these small non-profit organizations who may have difficulty in meeting this 50% match, probably because of the size of their budget or they don't have a lot of staff. The sliding scale calculations that we came up with are based on the budget and budget size and staffing. The sliding scale does not guarantee a grant award. All the grant guidelines must be adhered to as part of this process and all applications are subject to the same rigorous review process regardless of the organization's budget and size. So, again, I'd like to bring back Kyle to explain the math.

SCHULTZ: Thanks Anton. Kyle Schultz, research manager for the record. The math here is a little bit more--it's not as fuzzy as with the economic impact calculator, so hopefully this is fairly intuitive for people. But basically what the sliding scale does, and this is a visual representation of it, is it tries to help out smaller organizations by limiting the match percentage that they have to meet for these grants. So, essentially what we've structured this scale in a way that as budget sizes increase and staffing sizes increase, the amount of match that you are required to have increases as well proportionally based on those. So, this should be noted that the sliding scale applies to budgets of applicants which is under \$500,000. Anyone who has a budget over \$500,000 automatically has a 50% match. And it should also be noted that 50% is the cutoff. So, if anyone applies for a grant, based on this formula, if the match percentage is over 50% based on the formula, they just automatically are scaled down to 50%. The math or the actual formula for the sliding scale is kind of at the top of the slide here. So, these numbers are percentages represented in terms of decimal points. So, everyone starts at 20%, which is that 0.2 number and then whatever the grantee's, the grant applicant's, budget size is, it's multiplied by that really small number kind of to the right of that. So, again, each incremental dollar

in the budget size is multiplied by that number. There's also a staffing component to this, and the thinking behind having a staffing component is whether you have a large budget size or a large staff, our thought is that you have more or better resources to successfully implement these grants. So, each additional full-time staff member adds a half a percentage point to the match percentage. And each part-time staff member is a quarter of a percentage point to that. So, we thought we'd be good to provide a couple of examples of how this would work in practice with some mock numbers. So, the first example is an organization who's applying for a grant whose budget size is \$210,000. Their full-time staff is two, their part-time staff is two. That equates once you plug all those numbers into a 34.1% match. And what we're doing is we're rounding to the nearest 10%, just for sake of simplicity when we're kind of granting these awards. So, they would be rounded down to a 30% match. The second example is a budget size of \$460,000. They have ample staff. So, full-time staff of seven, part-time staff of one. Their match percentage, again, when you plug all that into the formula, it's 51.4%. So, because they're over 50%, they're just automatically rounded down to 50% match percentage. So, that's the formula behind it. I will pass it back to Anton for the motion. Thank you.

ECKERT: Before we get to the motion, Anton Eckert for the record. Are there any questions related to the matching sliding scale?

ANTHONY: Okay, I will go to the South. Do any commissioners in the South have any questions or comments? Very good. Anyone up here have any questions or comments? I see none. I'll take a motion.

MURDOCK: Rick Murdock, for the record. I'd like to make a motion to accept the rural grant sliding scale as presented to implement it in starting with FY124 grants.

ANTHONY: Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. Is there a second?

HARRIS: Second.

ANTHONY: I have a motion and a second from Commissioner Harris. Any other questions or comments on the motion? All those in favor signified by saying aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

ANTHONY: Opposed nay. The motion carries. Thank you.

BENOIT: Excuse me, Lieutenant Governor. Kelly Benoit, for the record. I want the record to reflect that Commissioner Estipona arrived at 4:06 p.m. And I would also like to note for the record that we have three commissioners who are absent excused. Commissioner Hill, Commissioner Lester, and Commissioner Wadsworth.

ANTHONY: Thank you for that. Okay. We are now onto agenda item J. Possible action, rural marketing grants update, projects related to tourism allocation. Anton Eckert.

ECKERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to give you a little bit of context, again, around the projects related to tourism. We, again, by statute, collect this funding every two years. The money is available and collected and available for us to use. This is before my time, but I believe we've only done one grant cycle related to this. Typically, it's projects related to tourism, and ideally, I think that was in the past related to infrastructure. So, in the last two years, we have collected 97.6 in available funds under the PRT. Last commission meeting, we got approval for the remaining funds in the rural marketing grants for fiscal year 23. Not everyone applied for grants, and so we had a bit of the surplus there, about 80,000. The reason why it's "about," is typically a lot of the rural marketing grants may not get spent exactly to the dollar. So, sometimes some money does come back to us. So, there will be about 80,000 plus in there. And in the last commission meeting, it was agreed that we would use that funding to fund our Territory Strategic Plan, which I'll talk about in a second. And this is also

separate from the two million in EDA funding we have for Destination Development. And that will be distributed in the completion of the 3D Projects which will start to happen in August of this year. So, the idea around using this funding is really for strategic planning for our territories. It's been a while since the territories have started and over time, they may not have taken a look at their plans. And we thought we'd take a step back and help territories kind of reset in this new world post-pandemic, on what their mission and vision is as a territory moving forward. Really trying to understand their purpose and the value that they bring to their partners. So, with that, we'd like to use the collective funding, to conduct an RFQ with a pre-designed brief that would really identify and purpose for the territories and implement a framework for future territory initiatives to create a mission and vision statement that would also align with what we do at Travel Nevada. Secondly, we wanted to look at how do we increase participation and membership in the territories, because that is the single biggest complaint that we get from the territories and the struggle that they have is they're losing people or people have moved on, and they just need to get more engagement. So, we're hoping that through this process we'll be able to help decline that and as well as some succession planning and making sure the next generation of leaders are coming through the territories. We will provide a short list to all the territories of recommended vendors who specialize in strategic planning for our rural destinations and tribes. And we want to monitor the process through this and support the territory as they go through their planning. We hope to get all the final plans completed no later than December 13th, 2023. That would align at right in time for rural marketing grants in 2025, for them to really go out with a solid program. So, unless there are any questions related to that, we're seeking action to invest the 97.6 in projects related to tourism funds for our strategic planning for territories.

ANTHONY: Very good. Thank you. Any comments here? Any comments? Yes, commissioner Harris?

HARRIS: I just want to applaud the fact that the territories are going through the mission and vision and updating what needs to be done and really getting clarity on the brand. I think that is really important moving forward, and I absolutely applaud that. Thank you.

ECKERT: Thank you, Commissioner Harris. I just also want to reiterate; this is a one-time opportunity that we have the fundings and I have talked to all the chairs and they agree that it is needed and they're very eager to get started.

ANTHONY: Great. Any questions or comments in the South? Very good. I'll take a motion then, please.

MURDOCK: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. Rick Murdock, for the record. I'd like to make a motion to invest \$97,600 in projects related to tourism funds into the Territory Strategic Planning Program to be combined with pre-approved and unspent FY23 Rural Marketing Grant funds for a total investment of \$180,000 for six territories.

ANTHONY: Thank you. Do I have a second?

HARRIS: Charles Harris with a second.

ANTHONY: Commissioner Harris was second.

ANTHONY: Any other questions or comments on the motion? All those in favor signify by saying aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

ANTHONY: Opposed? Nay? No Nays. Motion carries. Thank you.

ECKERT: Anton Eckert for the record. Thank you. That'll go a long way in making sure that we are strong and resilient in the future.

ANTHONY: Thank you. This is Stavros Anthony. We are now on agenda item K. This is a discussion only Industry Development update.

ECKERT: Thank you again, Mr. Chair. Anton Eckert, for the record. I want to give you an update on our 3D Program, which stands for Destination Development Demonstration. So, just to give you a little context about this. Our Destination Development program started almost a year ago. We started with an RFP to find a contractor to help us design our program. We also created guidelines and a rubric to help develop a grant. And we also developed a working group of state and federal partners to help us decide what projects we should work on. So, we had a call for concepts. We received 13 projects, and we selected six that were divided into two cohorts. The first one started in January, will end in August. The second cohort will start in September and end in April. And then in May and June, our contractor, Better Destinations, will provide us with a final report for that. So, in our first cohort, just to give a quick reminder, the first three applicants included Friends of Black Rock High Rock. They're looking at developing a welcome center as part of Heritage Tourism that really leans into their unique history. Lincoln County was part of a pilot program prior to this, our launch of the 3D. And they're looking for additional funding and technical assistance to support them enhancing their services and amenities including wayfinding in their area. White Pine County is looking to be the base camp for Eastern Nevada, and they will be connecting their community for outdoor recreation and the arts. As I mentioned, we started these in January with a stakeholder mapping each of those organizations, forming their steering committees and the start to beginning a destination audit. My colleague, Courtney Bloomer, just returned from the first set of FAMs that we're doing with our partners at Better Destinations to better understand the destination and understand where the gap analysis can come in. In the meantime, Better Destinations, our contractor, will also be assembling secondary data with rivals destination and our vendors, to better understand this. So, this is where we are in the progress. Here we are in March with a gap analysis and scenario modeling that will start to happen in the next couple of months. So, that's all going great. Does anybody have any questions related to 3D?

ANTHONY: Any questions on 3D in the South? Any questions? Okay. Continue on.

ECKERT: Great. Anton Eckert, for the record again. Moving on to the fun stuff. Rural Roundup, Mesquite, April 11 through 13, 2023. I just wanted to give you a quick update of what we're doing there, and I hope that all of you will be joining us. So, a summary of our overview. On Monday, April 10th, we are going to be leaving here with our staff and doing a staff fam. We will stay overnight in Beatty on Monday the 10th. On Tuesday, we'll continue to Mesquite. We have a lot of destination activities that are happening in our opening reception. On Wednesday, we've got the full day of the conference and our gala and award dinner. On Thursday will be the second half of our conference. It's just a half day. And then the staff will continue on a fam, which will overnight in Tonopah. And then on Friday, driving back up here to Carson. So, just to go over kind of more in detail what each of these days look like. On Tuesday, we'll have registration at the Eureka Hotel Casino and Resort, who is the host. We've got some destination activities planned from one to five with the help of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and the City of Mesquite. We've got some ATV trips, golfing, some painting, arts at the Art Center, self-guided walking tour, a Donkey Museum tour, and scavenger hunt. So, if you are interested in any of those, we did save some spots for you so we can get you in there. And then following that, we'll have an opening reception at the Virgin Valley Heritage Museum, which is going to be exciting and a lot of fun. This is the first time we've been back in three years since 2019 when the city of Fallon hosted. So, I think everyone's really excited to get back in person. We did have a virtual one in between. So, I think everybody just wants to see everyone again. Wednesday is the first full day of our conference. We've got a great keynote speaker, Michael Branch, who is an author and humorist to kind of kick it off. Our conference theme is around telling a great--story. So, we've got a lot of speakers related to that. So, we've got some

morning sessions after the keynote. We will have a Fun Territory Panel. We're going to do a fun thing there. I'm not going to give anything away. You'll just have to be there. We've got some networking time, and then we'll do afternoon breakouts as well before we return to a general session and some networking time before the dinner and as well as a pre-dinner reception. And then on Thursday, we have one general session we're doing with the workshop, which will be on Strategic Planning, kind of a kickoff to what the territories will be doing. And we'll break them up into territory groups as part of that. And we'll do some more networking and office hours with our staff as well as some of our partners at the state and federal level. And then we'll do a grab and go lunch. As I mentioned, our theme is storytelling, so we're starting out with how to tell a great story. And then from there, it's really kind of how do you tell your story in other areas, like to your residents, through strategic planning, through integrated marketing and research, through video, through the travel trade funding, how to get funding to tell your story and sustainable outdoor recreation. So, these are kind of all part of the plan for the day. And you can go to [ruralroundup.com](http://ruralroundup.com) for all the latest information on that. Our primary accommodation will be at the Eureka Casino and Resort, which is our host. And then we have secondary accommodations at the Holiday Inn and Suites if that one fills up quickly. So, that is Rural Roundup. Anyone have any questions?

ANTHONY: This is Stavros Anthony. I'm looking forward to it. It sounds like a lot of fun. Thanks.

ECKERT: Thank you.

ANTHONY: All right. Any other questions or comments? Yes, Vice Chair?

MURDOCK: Thank you. Rick Murdock, for the record. I'd like to thank Commissioner Harris for sponsoring the opening reception. Yes, from the RSCVA in the city of Mesquite.

ECKERT: Sorry. That was the LVCVA.

MURDOCK: Oh, it says RSCVA. So--

ECKERT: Oh, that is a typo. I apologize. I thought I caught all the typos.

ANTHONY: Maybe it's a co-sponsor. So, keep that in mind. <laugh>

ECKERT: I was probably doing too many things at once. I skipped that one.

ANTHONY: Any other questions or comments? In the South? Anything? Very good. Okay. That's it? Okay, thank you. All right. We are now on agenda item L for discussion only, Creative Development Timeline.

KAWCHACK: Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor and members of the commission. This is Emmy Kawchack, Deputy Director, for the record. Usually, you hear a lot of marketing updates. Everyone, I assure you, has been very hard at work implementing the paid media buy that was approved at the December meeting. So, as Brenda mentioned earlier, in January, we kicked off the year with a brand workshop as part of our process in working toward our new brand campaign. So, today I want to introduce Kimberly Pedego from Noble Studios, and she will give us a brief overview of that process and review the timeline with you today. At the next meeting, you'll be seeing a lot more from the marketing team. We'll have our paid media and our creative at that meeting. So, I'll hand it over to you if you want to grab that. Thanks.

ANTHONY: Thank you. Welcome and state your name and go right ahead.

PEDEGO: Hi. Kimberly Pedego with Noble Studios, for the record. Thank you for having us today. We're excited to come and provide an update to what we've been doing for the brand strategy work. So, what have we been up to since we last met? We have been busy on what we call the UX Positioning Discovery Process. So, it's a comprehensive process that Noble Studios has in place where we really

look at all of the internal components of the brand. We look at the competitive set. We look at travelers and what we call the X factor, which is a lot of industry trends and what's happening in the space. We dive into all of the marketing materials and channels and come out with that assessment of that research. We have done a very robust internal survey with Travel Nevada staff as well as the magazine stakeholders and partners. And then as both Brenda and Emmy mentioned, we had a brand workshop with the staff and Commissioner Estipona. Thank you for being a part of that. We will be presenting the brand platform draft to the Travel Nevada team on Friday, which is so exciting. And then we are very quickly going to be going into some testing around positioning statements for the brand with Destination Analysts in partnership with Kyle and the research team. So, these are just some pictures from the brand workshop. It was a really great full day hosted at the Nevada Museum. We had a very collaborative session, and we got a lot of great energy and ideas and internal alignment among the Travel Nevada team. And so, why do we do it this way? We just like to anchor back onto our process to make sure it's very objective in nature. We took a lot of time and energy to go and really understand the current brand health perception and market equity. So, we spent a lot of time digging into the current brand, prior brand research. We looked at all of the documentation. We also deployed some custom market research and audience studies. We looked at key competitive destinations of states across mainly the Western United States as well as some additional states such as Texas and Florida. We did the internal survey, as I mentioned in the brand workshop. And then we did our testing with destination analysts, a positioning statement. So, it's a very robust, very objective process that we go through. And it's important that it is that way, that it's collaborative and data informed because ultimately, it's what goes into what we call a performance brand. So, it's a brand that will really perform and resonate with external audiences, but it also provides this internal culture that everybody can rally around. So, it's inside out, outside in, which is a beautiful mix for a brand. So, the last slide here is just an update on what to expect next. We are presenting, as I mentioned, to the staff on Friday. From there, we're very quickly launching into research with Destination Analysts. We're going to be going through a process of creating brief concepting campaigns, collaborating with Fahlgren Mortine on the media buys and the media plan. Once we get the research back from Destination Analysts, tweaking concepts and taking what we learned from that. And then we'll be coming back to the June commission meeting to present to you all back where we're at in that point. And then we will go into full production planning and what we're looking to launch in September of 2023. So, that's it from Noble. Any questions?

ANTHONY: Okay. Any questions or comments from the commission? Yes?

ESTIPONA: Edward Estipona, for the record. I just want to say I was part of that process when Noble was working with the staff, and it was a really great day. It's really great to be able to have a group of people that went into the pandemic, and everybody hunkered down and they were running short staffed and weren't fully staffed. But yet, you could see how this group kind of stayed together. And I just applaud them for coming together and just really being open and honest about everything that's going on because I think that that has given these guys a kind of ammunition and thought to be able to figure out, where do we go from here? So, I really enjoyed being part of that process and I think it's a good solid footing. Because when you can involve having the internal culture of the staff and making it go outside, it's always going to be a stronger campaign cause we're not faking it. It's who we are. Thank you.

ANTHONY: Excellent. Thank you. Any other comments from Commissioners down in Las Vegas? All right. Thank you. That's it? Okay. Very good. All right. We're onto agenda item M for possible action, upcoming meetings.

SCOLARI: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. For the record, Brenda Scolari. I just want to review our upcoming meeting schedule. We do have a change. Normally we meet on the eighth, just so everyone can remember that. We'd like to change our June meeting from June 8th to June 15th for two reasons.

One, to better accommodate the Lieutenant Governor and his schedule in the Senate. That will be right around the end of session, so, make sure he can make the meeting. And the other is to give our Industry Development team another week to consider our grant applications. We have a very busy May, so that would be helpful to them, too. So, hoping that will be a good day for everyone. And the rest of the schedule is as stated in December, which would be September 8th, December 8th, and March 8th, 2024.

ANTHONY: Great. Stavros Anthony. So, the other three, the time is 3:00? Is that correct?

SCOLARI: Lieutenant Governor, normally we have the meeting at one o'clock.

ANTHONY: So, they are all at 1:00, then?

SCOLARI: Yes. In that, on June 15th, you will be done with your duties in the Senate. So, we can move it back to 1:00.

ANTHONY: And then September 8th and December and March is at 1:00 also?

SCOLARI: Correct.

ANTHONY: Okay, great. Okay. Any questions or comments from the commission? Yes.

MOON: Regarding the schedule. Jane Moon, for the record. I'm sure you saw that those are all Fridays. And in terms of attendance, I just want to make sure that we're all okay with Friday meetings. We are two to three hours.

SCOLARI: Brenda Scolari, for the record. We try to keep the meetings to two hours. Is Friday a problem? If Friday is an issue, we can consider other days.

ANTHONY: Okay. Thanks for pointing that out. Anybody have any issues with the dates, the times, the day of the week, anything? In Las Vegas, any issues?

MOON: Jane Moon, again, for the record. Full transparency. I have a son that'll be playing college ball, so I might not be available, but I will try. Fridays might be my travel day, so.

ANTHONY: Okay. Well, I hope you can make it. I know your son's basketball is obviously more important. Absolutely. I would be there, too. Anything else? Okay. Then, I will entertain a motion.

MURDOCK: Hi. Rick Murdock, for the record. I'd like to make a motion to approve the commission meeting dates as proposed. June 15th, September 8th, December 8th, and March 8th.

ANTHONY: Do I have a second?

ESTIPONA: Edward Estipona, for the record. I second.

ANTHONY: Thank you. I have motion and second. Any discussion on the motion and the second? All those in favor signify by saying aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

ANTHONY: Oppose nay. The motion carries. All right. We are now on to public comment. This is the second public comment for this meeting. If you'd like to make a public comment, come up to the microphone and you have three minutes to make comments. So, we'll go to Las Vegas. Anybody in Las Vegas have any public comment? All right. I don't see anybody. How about here in Carson City? Is anyone here that would like to make a public comment? Okay. Anybody on the phone or emails or anything else?

BENOIT: Kelly Benoit, for the record. No emails with public comments.

ANTHONY: Okay. Then, I'll close public comment and I will take a motion to adjourn.

MURDOCK: Rick Murdock, for the record. I'd like to make a motion to adjourn.

ANTHONY: Thank you. Is there a second?

ESTIPONA: Edward Estipona, for the record. I second.

ANTHONY: Okay. We have a motion and a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

ANTHONY: No nays. We are adjourned. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

[Meeting adjourned at 2:48 PM]

DRAFT