

**CARSON CITY CULTURAL COMMISSION**  
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The meeting of the Carson City Cultural Commission was held on September 16, 2008, 5:30 p.m., at the Community Center-Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

**PRESENT:** Peter Barton  
Jeffrey Scott  
Pete Livermore  
Stephen Lincoln  
Karen Abowd  
Jennifer Russell

**STAFF:** Joe McCarthy, Director of the Office of Business Development  
Joel Benton, Deputy District Attorney  
Robin A. Hodgkin, Nevada Arts Council  
John Sheldon, Reno Arts Commission  
Denise Gillott, Carson City Arts & Culture Coalition  
Mitch Ames, Operations Manager, Carson City Community Center  
Darlene Rubin, Recording Secretary

**NOTE:** A recording of these proceedings, the commission's agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the recording secretary during the meeting are public record, on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office. These materials are available for review during regular business hours.

**A. CALL TO ORDER (5:30:36)** - This being the inaugural meeting of the Carson City Cultural Commission with the Chairperson yet to be voted on, the meeting was called to order by Supervisor Pete Livermore.

**B. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM** - Roll was called and a quorum was present. Linda Deacy was absent.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENIZED ITEMS (5:31:37)** - Mr. Livermore opened by welcoming everyone. He then asked the appointed members to introduce themselves:

Karen Abowd, a licensed interior designer in the State of Nevada, also has a business, Adele's Restaurant, in Carson City.

Stephen Lincoln, works with ReMax Realty Affiliates, in Carson City, where he has lived for 30 years. He also serves on the Carson City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Jennifer Russell, president of Capitol City Entertainment, owners of the Carson Station and the Station Grill.

Peter Barton, acting administrator for the Division of Museums and History, represents the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs on the newly-formed Carson City Cultural Commission.

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Jeffrey Scott, businessman and co-owner of Wild Horse Productions in Carson City.

Pete Livermore, member of the Board of Supervisors appointed to represent the BOS.

Mr. Livermore remarked that the seating of this commission was an exciting opportunity that did not often happen, to see the commission that would have a huge influence on arts and culture and bring benefits to this community for many years into the future.

Robin Hodgkin, Nevada Arts Council, a state agency, offered introductory and welcoming comments on behalf of Executive Director, Susan Boskoff, and herself. They had been a part of the Carson City Arts and Culture Coalition through the arrival of the Commission in Carson City. The State of Nevada had four arts commissions: Reno, Las Vegas, Fernley, and now, Carson City. Recently the City of Elko established an advisory committee but had not yet taken the step to form an arts commission.

She continued, stating: "On behalf of the Nevada Arts Council and the Department of Cultural Affairs, I bring both congratulations and appreciation to Carson City and the Carson City Arts and Cultural Coalition for the commitment of time and effort required and the Business Development Office and Pete Livermore to bring forth an Arts and Culture Commission to the City.

"We envision a Nevada in which the value of the arts, science, education, architecture, literature, and social endeavor is a fundamental cornerstone in all of our communities. We envision a Nevada where the resources that represent these values and held in the public trust are available to all of its citizens. We envision a Nevada where each community has the opportunity to create a shared vision to promote and support a vibrant and vital cultural identity. You have made our vision come to life and in doing so have demonstrated your commitment to create a capitol city that acknowledges front and center the role that the arts play as a community animator, an economic force, and an educational opportunity.

"The emergence of the Carson City Cultural Commission is timely as the Nevada Arts Council begins a journey through the state this fall to engage community conversations about the arts. And those conversations begin actually right here in Carson City on October 27. You'll be hearing more about it both through the Arts and Culture Coalition and then through the Nevada State Arts Council. As well, the Arts Council along with the state's arts industry is planning a number of activities during the week of March 4 through 7, 2009. We are calling it Nevada Arts Advocacy Week, and it will include Arts Day in Carson City, sponsored by the Nevada Arts Advocates, and the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Arts Awards and a cultural convening in Reno. We imagine that the Carson City Cultural Commission will be integral to the success of these activities and we are extremely glad to have you as our partner and our collaborator. Thank you all again for your service to your community."

John Shelton, a nonprofit consultant with Impresario Management, had been working with a number of organizations over the last few years in Carson City, including Brewery Arts Center, Carson City Public Library, and the Redevelopment Office, to put together the Cultural Coalition. He had also advised Pete Livermore, Joe McCarthy, and Tammy Westergard on issues related to putting together an arts commission. He stated:

"As Chair of the Reno Arts Commission, I would like to congratulate you on a job well done. I know it's been some time for us to get to this place but it's happening and is very exciting that we now have a fourth arts

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commission. And as the chair of the first arts commission, it is very exciting to have peers that we can perhaps work with, and since you're so close I think we could probably work on opportunities that have a dialogue between Reno and Carson about things that we could do collaboratively. Thank you for all the work you're doing and are going to do, and congratulations . . . it's good to have you here."

Denise Gillott, Carson City Arts and Cultural Coalition, said: "I wanted to update all of you on what has been going on at some of our meetings; they have been pretty exciting. We had the idea and are going forth right now with a political forum, which will take place September 29, in the Sierra Room, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. We are asking the mayoral candidates and the board of supervisor candidates to attend. Our questions were polled throughout the group and they will all be arts and culture-based questions. We have nine completed questions that will be presented to the candidates. Our hope is that they will take the time and really do the research, therefore if they had not really taken a look at the arts, maybe this would make them do so. We will then hopefully have time to take about three or four audience poll questions, and so far I think we're all set to go. I just wanted to bring it up to you to make sure that our goal is to have this place filled to the brim and out in the hallway to really show these candidates that the arts matter in Carson City, and they really do need to take notice. We are hoping that you all attend and please tell everyone you know and bring everyone you know."

Mitch Ames, Operations Manager for the Carson City Community Center/Bob Boldrick Theater, introduced his staff: Preston Dunn and Carol Peterson, and said: "On behalf of my staff and myself and the Recreation Division, I welcome you and we are here to help anyway we can."

**D. DISCLOSURES (5:41:24) - None.**

**E. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA (5:41:40) - None**

**F. SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR (Action) (5:41:52)** Mr. Livermore explained the election procedure and asked those who wished to be chair to so indicate. **Stephen Lincoln moved to nominate Peter Barton as Chair. Karen Abowd seconded the nomination, and by acclamation the motion was carried unanimously.** Mr. Livermore then passed the gavel to Mr. Barton to complete the election of the Vice Chair. Chair Barton opened the nominations for Vice Chair. **Jeffrey Scott nominated Karen Abowd as Vice Chair. Mr. Livermore seconded, and by acclamation the motion was carried unanimously.**

**G. NON ACTION ITEMS - DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION ONLY (5:43:34)**

**G-1. New Member Orientation, including open meeting law overview.** Joe McCarthy, staff to the Carson City Cultural Commission and Director of the Office of Business Development, invited Joel Benton to give an overview of responsibilities under N.R.S. Open Meeting Law.

Joel Benton, Senior Deputy District Attorney, gave a presentation as follows: "As a public body, there are certain requirements when a public body meets and what a public body can do. I am going to go over the Nevada Open Meeting Law and also the State requirements for the Ethics and Government Requirements, and the Carson City specific requirements.

"This entity is a public body and subject to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law. Essentially, every time a

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meeting occurs and a quorum (a majority) is present that is considered a meeting. If a quorum is present and you are going to deliberate toward a decision or take action on an item, then the Open Meeting Law applies. “*Deliberate*” includes discussion both of an item over which the commission has jurisdiction, and on which it is receiving information. For example, if there was a luncheon in which a majority of the members were going to be present and someone was going to present information, you would be subject to the Open Meeting Law. There are two exceptions: (1) if you meet with legal counsel regarding potential litigation, and (2) if you meet for collective bargaining purposes, to discuss collective bargaining agreements; this commission has no jurisdiction over collective bargaining.

“The Open Meeting Law requires that there must be a clear agenda of all topics that are going to be presented and discussed at your meeting. The agenda must list all the topics and a description; it has to give the public an idea of what the commission is going to discuss, and if the public is interested it lets them know what the commission’s business is so they can show up and participate. There must be a designated period--you noticed here in the beginning Pete Livermore called for public comment on non-agenized items. Pursuant to Nevada statutes there must be a period for public comments on non-agenized items. If you are going to take action on an item, the agenda must specify specifically that action may be taken. On this particular agenda you’ll notice that the election of a chair is a designated action item, whereas this is designated as a presentation, so this commission could not take action on the Open Meeting Law presentation.

“If you are going into a closed session-- there are a couple of reasons you could go into a closed session: One would be to discuss the character, fitness, or mental capacity of an individual who is not an executive officer of a local government. I don’t think that is going to apply to this commission, but if that were to be the case, your agenda would have to identify that you were going to go into a closed session for that particular reason.

“The agenda must be posted at least three business days prior to your meeting, so if the commission is going to discuss an item, the public must have adequate notice, considered being three business days. The notice must provide the time, date, and location of the meeting. When time is designated, you can begin after the time but not before--5:30 cannot be 5:29, but it can be 5:31. The agenda posting can be (1) Carson City Community Center (where your meeting is held), and three other places: City Hall, Library, Carson City Planning and Community Development Department. Finally, there must be a statement that if someone is physically disabled or requires special assistance, the City, upon adequate notice, will provide accommodations. The law provides that if someone requests a copy of your agenda in advance of posting, it should be mailed to them. Individuals can sign up and be placed on a six-month list and can re-register at the end of that period. There can be no private meetings; meetings must be open to the public. The exceptions are if you have a hearing (which would not really apply to this commission) you can exclude other witnesses so a witness cannot hear what another witness says; or exclude people who are willfully destructive at a meeting (which has not happened here in Carson City). A meeting can be conducted by telephonic conference, if the member cannot be present in person, and that counts toward the quorum, as well as they can vote as if they were present. The public is allowed to record meetings as long as it does not interfere with the meeting. If someone (in the public comment) brings up an item not on the agenda the board cannot discuss or take any action on it. We are required to record the meeting and take minutes of the meeting, which is the reason for the recording secretary’s presence. The minutes are available to the public. As part of the agenda the board may receive a “Board packet” which is back up material related to the agenda; unless confidential, those items are also available to the public.”

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One of the members asked if the board opened with a quorum and a member left after being counted, was it still a quorum. Mr. Benton said “no,” as soon as the quorum was lost the meeting was over.

Mr. Benton advised the board that the Ethics and Government Law was essentially when public officials were appointed to a board they were not allowed to vote on items. “There are two standards: the State standard (which is slightly less strict than the City standard) does not allow you to vote if you have a financial interest in the agenda item, or if someone, a family member or someone you do business with, has an interest in the item--that is described as acceptance of a gift or a loan from the person, if you and the person share a pecuniary interest then you must abstain from voting, but you do not have to remove yourself from the dais. Under the City standard, which will govern most of what we do, you must abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of an item if you have a financial interest in it. Also, if an immediate member of your family or someone with whom you have done business over the preceding 18 months in excess of \$500.00 has an interest, you must also abstain from discussing or voting on the item.”

Mr. Livermore stated one of his guiding principles was that it was easy to disclose. If there was any thought that a conflict might exist, then disclose. If there is some uncertainty, the district attorney is available at no charge for consultation. “Always err on the side of disclosure.”

**G-2. Staff Presentation (5:53:35)** - Joe McCarthy, Office of Business Development and staffing this commission, spoke about what he saw as the staff’s responsibility to this commission. He distributed a report done by a consultant, Virginia Wright, hired in 2002 by representatives of Brewery Arts Center and the Redevelopment Authority, with funding by the National Endowment of the Arts, to create what was called “*Creative Capitol--Carson City’s Community Arts Plan.*” Mr. McCarthy continued as follows:

“This is a terrific plan which inventoried all of our assets as well as gave us some direction, some of which we have implemented. She had canvassed a significant number of people in the community and in organizations to get their feedback which she developed into a solid report for us.” Mr. McCarthy went on to say that “. . . the individual artist, the arts, and the cultural organizations within Carson City reflect the excitement that is found in our town. They provide our community with an extraordinary variety of options through local stages, the galleries, museums, libraries and archives, festivals, community meeting spaces; they bring the arts and culture to everyone within western Nevada. The Carson City Cultural Commission now has an opportunity to provide a foundation for the integration of this creative energy. With staff help, experience, and, I like to say, some leadership because of my involvement in the arts over many years, the Commission will work to ensure stability, success, and continued growth of our artistic and cultural providers and serve as a partner and a catalyst for artistic innovation within our community.

“So how do we work toward defining a mission and a vision? That will be one of our number one objectives. The Cultural Commission must have at the end of the day a clear intent to harness some of the current efforts geared toward community growth--and we have a lot of efforts going on toward community growth at his point--and economic sustainability. The positive effects of the Commission’s work will be to expose the City’s arts and cultural talents as driving initiatives with the emphasis on economic development and cultural partners in planning and implementation, preserving our cultural assets, integrating art and culture into community life and highlighting us as a *bona fide* tourist destination. Through effective public policy, advocacy, strategic partnerships and funding, the Carson City Cultural Commission will lead the way in support of a culture-based

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economic development--you would hear that from an economic development guy--but it is a phrase that I have coined, and that is a strategy. This will include nonprofit organizations, heritage programs, libraries, historic sites, neighborhood arts programs, museums, theaters, community centers, downtown redevelopment initiatives, art galleries, festivals, public art, cultural tourism, and innovative programming that will all contribute to the quality of life, the economy, and the vibrancy of our community.

“Carson City is known for its extraordinary setting, we all know that, and its natural beauty enriches the daily life of each and every one of us as citizens. Inspired by a wealth of natural resources, the citizenry and the business community continue to build a community that reflects its surroundings. Geographic location positions Carson City as a regional hub. Historic forces have made it the home of indigenous and immigrant groups throughout its history and have created great diversity in this town, and we have an abundance of human resources that promise great economic potential. Carson City has an immediate opportunity to take its place alongside the great small cities of the west. We can be distinct from other more conventional, less visionary type communities. Along with this coming of age is a flowering of arts and culture in our town; the sign of a mature metropolitan area.

“The Commission will celebrate the diversity of the City’s ethnic groups who together provide the variety and multiplicity of art and cultural offerings that enrich the natural environment. You just had to go to *Salsa de Salsa* this weekend to get a taste of that. Every effort will be made to identify financial support for arts and cultural organizations to bring together these creative forces, inspire patronage, and stimulate artistic and cultural appreciation. Cultural developing is an untapped economic development resource to our town. If appropriately engaged at the local and the regional level to leverage significant fiscal stability and community wealth, it will provide additional good paying jobs and create sustainable enterprise. Without question a culture-based economic development emphasis has a chance to enhance our economy, strengthen our quality of life, and best of all build human capital in our town.

“The background to your Commission is obvious: it was established in 2008 by ordinance to serve the Board of Supervisors, to advise the Board of Supervisors and the Office of Business Development on promoting, encouraging, and increasing support for the arts and the cultural institutions, and the artists of Carson City. It will be the Commission’s responsibility to make all the recommendations to the Board of Supervisors pertaining to art and culture. It is also the Commission’s responsibility to advise our public officials and community members on projects and programs designed to promote public art throughout the neighborhoods of Carson City, develop policies to involve artists in some selected capitol improvement projects, and to encourage the private sector to include public art in private development. The Commission’s strength will depend on its ability to foster dynamic interactions with staff, with the art and cultural community, the business community, but most importantly the citizens of our town. These are complex relationships and I promise to help you shape these expectations. So bear in mind, if you take the high road you will in fact pull in the public, because I know from experience that our citizens really have a lot of curiosity and they have come to expect it.

“Over the next few months we will draft a practical guide, a road map that some people call a work plan, with the intent to bring together art and cultural interests with business interests to build a liveable, culturally vibrant and economically strong community. It takes tools, funding, and techniques that will lead to new employment opportunities and of course what we want is a broader tax base with direct impact on health, education, public safety, human services, and a creative, knowledgeable workforce within our community.

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“So, what do we do, in no particular order, I’m going to suggest we rewrite this plan--and this plan has a lot of good information, but there’s a lot of work to do. We need to get organized and engage a wide range of community stakeholders in our activities. We already have our Art and Cultural Coalition, 40 very active institutional members, as well as a number of artists, and there are quite a few people that meet regularly (monthly) at the library to continue to talk about their role in helping to celebrate the art and cultural community. In creating those relationships we want to truly fold into the exciting branding effort that’s going on in Carson City. It’s called “*A Taste of the High Sierra*,” that means we have taste in this town, and that’s the implication. And we want to build on our unique strengths and assets with that branding initiative. We want to develop adequate resources and funding strategies for the future so that we can get some things done and, finally, but most important, I think, in the beginning we want to mine the experiences of others.

“I really appreciate all of you coming up and talking to us about the Reno Arts Commission, which has a story quite similar to yours, and the Reno Arts Commission has really come a long way in putting the Truckee Meadows on the map nationally as a destination to enjoy art and cultural activities throughout the community. “*ART TOWN*” is just one perfect example of the successes of the Commission but there is lot more that they have done.”

Mr. McCarthy asked the members to read the Wright report, and said they would be a working Commission, and hoped to put them to work not only on the routine work of creating bylaw and a work plan, but to dip into that creative side of their brains and have some fun.

Mr. Livermore recalled that a few years ago, several people were inspired to bring together the arts and cultural elements of the community. He had been a voting member of the board when the “*Cultural Capitol*” report was received. Since that time it had been a well-kept secret; there was a tremendous amount of wealth in that document but now it needed to be reconstructed into a format that detailed short term and long term goals.

Mr. McCarthy noted that he and Tammy Westergard had started working on that project, they had formed a Website in order to have communication with commissioners and staff and members of the community relative to how to continue to engage their interest and stimulate the left side of the brain.

Tammy Westergard, Carson City Office of Business Development (CCOBD), extended appreciation and congratulations to each member of the Commission for their part in continuing to believe in the community’s treasures and leverage them in service of tomorrow’s vision. She made a slide presentation showing the Carson City Economic Development Website ([carsoncityecondev.com](http://carsoncityecondev.com)) and pointed out the link to the Carson City Arts and Culture Coalition Website ([carsoncityarts.org](http://carsoncityarts.org)), the site for the 40-plus members grass roots group, which they would want to refer to frequently.

She added that the Carson City Cultural Commission’s Website would be placed as a link on their Website, but for now the CCOBD was a simple site that would provide a framework for the members to organize contact information , meetings, agendas, minutes, and other information. As Joe McCarthy provided their homework assignments they would be able to find them uploaded on that site. Further, there may be work they could do through the Website that would make the preparation for their meetings easier. For the moment, it was a work in progress. There was a directional logo for the Commission that was helpful on the letterhead. The tabs within the site told the story about the Commission being the primary arts and culture advisory body to the Board of Supervisors (and they could use that language on their resumes impressing someone about what it was they did!).

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As they identified the mission and values of the Commission that would be posted, as well as their names. She asked to speak with someone about connecting email addresses on the site--whether to their places of business or to their homes, etc.--so they could communicate with one another and the public. The policies of the Commission were to be determined and eventually posted on the site. There would be a FAQs--which was often a place for members and others to find issues and hot topics within the community--it was a place where people could go to get some clarification in an easy-read way. To navigate to the site: CarsonCityCulturalCommission.org. That Web address would be printed on whatever collateral was developed for the Commission.

Chair Barton thanked Mrs. Westergard and Mr. McCarthy for developing the great body of work.

**G-3. Bylaw development (6:10:13)** - Chair Barton asked if there was a sample to follow. Mr. McCarthy said he had asked Roger Moellendorf for a copy of the Parks and Recreation Commission's bylaw, which he just received, and he suggested that staff do a first draft for the Commission. It would then be forwarded to members for review and possible discussion at the next meeting.

**G-4. Work plan development (6:11:01)** - Mr. McCarthy had given the members an assignment to look at the Indianapolis Cultural Commission. He commented on the project analysis session which some of the members had attended in Las Vegas, sponsored by the Urban Lands Institute and chaired by The Honorable William Hudnut, "who absolutely blew everybody away with his professional and style," the former mayor of Indianapolis and a four-term U. S. Congressman. He was dedicated to the livability of small to mid-sized cities and that was his focus as a consultant to Urban Lands. Mr. Hudnut told him to look at the Indianapolis site as a source for good ideas. Mr. McCarthy also noted the Pittsburgh Cultural District was another source.

Mr. Livermore stated that he had the Seattle Arts-Public Policies and Plans Ordinances that might be worth looking at when putting this Commission's policy draft together. Mr. McCarthy said he would be putting together a packet of all the materials for the members. He added that he would create a quick first draft of a work plan so the Commission had the "bones to work with." After that, they would be able to "zero in on what their interests were and what their focus would be." He noted that there was a lot of work to do and the message needed to get out to the community. Mr. McCarthy added that members should think about the areas they came from, how could their business relationships benefit other businesses and the community-at-large.

Mr. Livermore pointed out the benefits of sports recreation and what it brought to the community in dollars returned to the tax base. The Coalition had also discussed the value of WNC's plays and other activities. Both those items should be looked at in relation to the work plan. When representations were made to the Board of Supervisors about funding elements and sources, attention is geared to those things that produce a return to the tax base. Presently there was a lot of spin from sports activities--soccer tournaments, softball tournaments. However, there was similarity in the arts and culture programs--the Jazz Fest that BAC held, the *Salsa de Salsa* last weekend in Telegraph Square.

Chair Barton summed it up by stating that it was "about liveable communities . . . arts and culture are absolutely as fundamental as good roads and good schools to making liveable communities. There was so much energy among the commissioners; we all have the fire in the belly from many years associated with arts and culture, and now we have to funnel that energy so that we make one grand fire and make a real difference in the community. We are all volunteers but we're all here because we want to be, and we look forward, Joe, to working with you and

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the City to improve our collective lot.”

Mr. Barton encouraged those commissioners who had not yet attended one of the Carson City Arts and Cultural Coalition meetings, to do so; it was an “electric in the room” experience. The next meeting is the third Friday of the month--September 19, and the following month, October 17--at the Carson City Library at 1 or 1:30. It would provide additional background to the work this Commission was going to undertake.

**G-5. Future agenda items (6:18:10)** - Mr. Livermore suggested assessing the value of the performing arts. Also, members could each suggest two or three items they would like to see and give them to the chairman who could then put together a calendar so everyone would know when their items would be heard.

Member Stephen Lincoln commented that he served on the Charter Review Committee and they had come up with bylaws with the help of Melanie Bruketta, who had found a generic set of bylaws that they had adapted. He suggested checking with her.

Mr. Livermore reminded that the bylaws should specify the meeting date which, because of a recent vacancy, could be held on the third Tuesday of the month in the Community Center-Sierra Room.

**G-6. Commissioner comments on non-agenized items** - Mr. McCarthy suggested that in the beginning the Commission meet monthly, later on perhaps meetings could be reduced to every other month.

The next meeting was set for Tuesday, October 21, at 5:30, then again on Tuesday, November 18, at 5:30, with no meeting in December.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded and carried unanimously.

Chair Barton adjourned the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

The minutes of the Carson City Cultural Commission meeting of September 16, 2008, ARE SO APPROVED this 18<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2008.

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Peter Barton, Chair