



State of Nevada

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Joe Lombardo, Governor

James A. Settelmeyer, Director

Arthur Krupicz, Administrator

Joseph Curtis, Chair

MINUTES OF THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

DATE: Tuesday, December 2, 2025

PLACE: Comstock Historic District Commission Office, 20 North E. Street, Virginia City, Nevada 89440

WORKSHOP MEETING: None

REGULAR MEETING TIME: 5:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER: 5:03 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. The Pledge was recited.

CONFIRMATION THAT MEETING WAS PROPERLY POSTED. Confirmed.

COMMISSIONER ROLL CALL. Quorum was achieved.

Clay Mitchell – Present

Nancy Cleaves – Present

Julie Workman – Present

David Bates – Absent

Calvin Dillon – Present

Tammy Hendrix – Absent

Joe Curtis – Present

Mercedes de la Garza – Present

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Administrator, Art Krupicz - Present

SHPO Deputy Administrator, Robin Reed - Present

Deputy Attorney General, Alexa Ravencroft – Present

Former District Officer, Shelley Smith – Present (via phone)

APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 2ND, 2025 MEETING AGENDA.

Calvin Dillon moved to approve, Nancy Cleaves seconded. The December meeting agenda was approved unanimously.

OPENING PUBLIC COMMENT.

Comstock Historic District Commission (CHDC) Chair, Joe Curtis, opened the meeting to public comment by stating that comments relevant to the CHDC would be taken at the beginning and at the end of the meeting and at the discretion of the Chair on agenda items listed for possible action. Comments were limited to three minutes per person and not restricted by viewpoint. It was advised that no action would be taken on any matters raised during the public comment period and all members of the public providing comment would first be asked to begin by stating their name for the record. The Chair opened the floor to the public for comment; there was no public comment and the meeting proceeded.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS.

- I. Chair Report- Joe Curtis began his report by commenting that he has been in ongoing contact with two or three different people. Nothing particularly earth shaking. One has to do with brick work on the miner's union hall building. He said he thinks Shelly had taken care of that. The other one he has been working with is a small log cabin style structure in Silver City. The structure will be located on High Street and will be brought before the Commission at some point. He hasn't had any new applications. He's been checking in on the CHDC building and doing some clean up. There have been issues with waste management not picking up the trash. Austin Osborne of Storey County offered to call waste management and help resolve the problem and will follow up with Joe.

- II. Commissioner Comments- Clay Mitchell thanked Nicole Ting for her years with the Commission as a representative of the Attorney General's Office and welcomed Alexa Ravencroft, who is the new representative from the AG's Office. He appreciates her help keeping the Commission on the right track.

Julie Workman said the Dayton Historical Society had a haunted hayride at the end of October that was very good. Everyone had a good time and lots of history was shared with the community. Julie said the CHDC Christmas party, a tradition started by Bert is coming up. She had a card for everyone to sign to express appreciation for the work that has been done.

Nancy Cleaves wished everyone a happy holiday season.

Mercedes de la Garza encouraged everyone to go look at St. Paul's new paint because it turned out quite beautiful. She said only two elevations are painted and they are looking for funding to paint the other two. Commissioners who saw the building agreed that the paint looked great. Mercedes said the windows on the painted elevations were also repaired. Joe Curtis asked if the rock foundation had been repaired because a raccoon had been getting in. Mercedes de la Garza said she was told the foundation holes were repaired.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 7TH, 2025 MEETING MINUTES.

Clay Mitchell said there were two corrections that needed to be made. The first is to move Nicole Ting from the roll call to be listed separately from the Commission. The second edit was the misspelling of Claude Sendon's last name in the public comments section. Clay Mitchell moved to approve with two noted corrections, Julie Workman seconded. The October meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

ITEM ONE; REVISED PROPOSED REGULATION OF THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, LCB FILE NO. R016-24.

Joe Curtis thanked Clay Mitchell, Nicole Ting, Storey County Manager Austin Osborne, Alexa Ravencroft and Shelly Smith for their time and effort working together to revise the regulations. Joe Curtis asked Clay Mitchell to discuss concerns raised by Senators Daly and Titus during the Legislation Commission hearing.

Clay said Senator Daly was concerned with the federal regulation referenced in the state regulation because of potential change in the federal regulation over time. Senator Daly was concerned about stability and consistency should federal regulations change. Clay said the federal regulation referenced was not regulatory, only advisory. Clay said the simplest way to make the reference satisfactory to Senator Daly was to add the date the federal regulation was adopted. He said they added 1995 to the regulation to reference that specific version.

Clay said Senator Titus was concerned about the specificity of the district guidelines and that the map provided with the meeting packet was a lower resolution, not as crisp and clean as the one the Commission intends to use. Clay said that Senator Titus said if there was a conflict between the map and the written description, the Commission should choose which would take precedence. Clay said if there is a conflict, the map will take precedence as Senator Titus was concerned that it might lead to ambiguity and potential struggles in the future if the map did not accurately represent the boundaries of the district. Clay said to satisfy Senator Titus, the Commission would flip the precedence and say that the written description will take precedence.

Clay said the Commission is very confident that the written description and the map line up exactly and are perfectly in step and felt this was a simple way to satisfy the concern. Clay said if the Commission chose to approve those two changes, the Commission has time to submit it back to the Legislative Council Bureau and they can send it back to the Legislative Commission for their meeting later this month. Clay said February is the two-year deadline to finish the regulation changes. If the regulations are not finished by the deadline, the Commission would have to start over.

Joe Curtis thanked Clay and asked if there were any concerns or comments from the Commissioners. Various members of the Commission thanked Clay for his presentation and thought it was good. Joe Curtis asked Alexa Ravencroft from the Attorney General's office if she had any input. Alexa did not have further input. Joe Curtis asked if there was any public comment, there was none.

Clay Mitchell moved to adopt the revised proposed regulation of Comstock Historic District Commission, LCB file No. R016-24 and resubmit to the LCB for the Legislative Commission for their approval. Nancy Cleaves seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

ITEM TWO; AUTHORIZATION TO EXPLORE AND NEGOTIATE A PROPOSED AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES WITH STOREY COUNTY.

Clay Mitchell disclosed that he holds a position with both parties in the discussion and out of an abundance of caution recused himself from voting on this item. He said it appears that the NRS allows him to participate in the conversation, not to advocate for or against or vote. He will be happy to make himself available for information or clarification.

Joe Curtis said with Shelly Smith leaving as District Officer discussion has come up about working with Storey County, due them having a lack of office space for two or more employees. The Commission and County would like to work out a temporary agreement to place one or two employees in the Comstock Historic District building. Temporary hasn't been defined but Joe thinks it would probably be six

months. Joe said it would help the Commission in a sense, the building would be lived in, and staff could pass on material and information between the Commission/SHPO and public. Therefore, it will be helpful to both sides.

Joe asked if the Commission gave permission to discuss the subject with the County and if they had the authority to let County staff use the building. Joe asked the Commissioners for discussion and comment.

Nancy Cleaves said it sounds like a logical solution and asked for more information. She wanted to know if there was a person in mind. Joe Curtis said there would possibly be one or two building inspector personnel. Joe asked Austin Osborne, County Manager, to answer. Austin Osborne said, with contribution and collaboration with the Commission, they are looking at two or three project managers, working on projects throughout Comstock, and other parts of the County; probably not the building department but it could be others. Nancy Cleaves asked if they would be full-time employees. Joe said he didn't have those specifics at this time because they are looking for permission from the Commission and then both parties can decide what it will look like. Austin Osborne added that he was glad Joe Curtis said what he did because that level of discussion hasn't happened yet. The County hasn't seen the layout of the building yet; they would like to see it, but at this point he appreciates the Commission considering and discussing the idea with the County. The discussion is very preliminary at this point.

Joe Curtis asked Nancy Cleaves if that answered her questions. Nancy asked, if someone from the County came in would that be until SHPO hires permanent staff? Clay Mitchell offered some context. He said the CHDC doesn't have a source of income. The challenge has been that CHCDC is authorized to hire people but doesn't have a way to pay them. SHPO has included staff in their budget and has provided help for us. What the Commission would like to discuss is providing something of value to the County: office space, in exchange for staffing, to help the Commission until a more permanent solution can be achieved. The County could possibly provide administrative assistance to the Commission, building maintenance, and keeping the building open and occupied. A permanent solution would involve legislative action in the future. This would be a different way to fill the gap than having SHPO hire someone. Nancy Cleaves thanked Clay for the clarification.

Joe Curtis asked Mercedes de la Garza if she had any comments. Mercedes said she would like some clarification. She isn't opposed to having someone in the building. She didn't want to assume the person could take on tasks outside of building maintenance related to the building itself and not the Commission. Someone with vast volumes of knowledge like Shelly or Bert is something SHPO would need to provide. Mercedes said she was also struggling to figure out where the County people would fit in the building since the building doesn't lend itself to having independent offices. She can't see where someone not fully related to the Commission would go in the building space. She also wanted to follow up on what Nancy asked about how the Commission would get someone out of the building if they wanted the space back. Joe Curtis answered that occupancy and exit would be part of any M.O.U. and that we are really at the point where we are looking for permission to have those discussions with the County and see if there is a possibility of assisting temporarily. He said County personnel would in no way be expected to have the experience and capabilities of a district officer. Mercedes de la Garza said Joe's answer made her feel better. She also asked if County employees will also help tourists who visit the building.

Joe Curtis said those are excellent points. He said the item on the agenda is to allow the Commission to get together and discuss all those points. In the meantime, he's taking care of daily business. Austin

Osborne asked to help and said this is just preliminary discussion, but the County is envisioning potentially two things: human resources could potentially collaborate with the Commission in developing the job descriptions and duties to support the CHDC Chair. The Commission would be in control of hiring the people and making sure they have the qualifications they want. The County would help facilitate and support, not dictate staffing. The County is looking for two or three workstations, out of the way. Those people would be in and out of the building doing field and desk work.

Clay Mitchell said he had not seen the upstairs of the building until two weeks ago. He said the space is partially finished and used for storage. He wondered if the potential of workstations in that space could be explored.

Calvin Dillion said he thinks this is a good opportunity to cooperate with all parties, and he would like to advance the discussions. Julie workman agreed with Calvin.

Joe Curtis asked Alexa Ravencroft from the AG's office if anything discussed is cause for concern. Alexa said a lot of the questions being asked would pertain to potential terms of the contract such as who the staff members would be, what their hours would be, and where they would be located etc. and that it is all very speculative. At this point the only item on the agenda is to authorize the chairman to begin negotiations and so those questions will be answered in due time. She said, to reiterate, right now it is just to authorize to begin discussions. Joe Curtis thanked Alexa and asked if there was any public comment.

Mike Workman said he thought collaboration between local entities and the state government could benefit both entities and the citizenry. He thinks the Commission is headed in the right direction.

Sara Sturtz from Storey County said most historic districts in the country are handled at the local level, either city or county. By entering this interlocal agreement, the Comstock Historic District would be on the local level. She is confident that Storey County can provide staff to the Commission if that comes up in negotiations as something that is needed. She thinks an agreement that works for both parties can be developed. There are other historic districts in the state that do things such as approval matrixes and that a matrix could be developed so that some County staff are approving things and some by the Commission. She is a SOI qualified archaeologist, worked with SHPO, and understands the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, so it is not like Storey County does not have anyone with knowledge about historic preservation. The County Commissioner is very smart and good at understanding preservation so people can have confidence that we can enter into an agreement that works for both parties. Joe thanked Sara for her input.

Art Krupicz, Administrator for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), said SHPO is in support of the Commission exploring this and will be prepared to join the discussion should the Commission approve. SHPO will be there to play a role, however that is defined.

Joe Curtis said he wanted to clarify a couple items about the building itself. The title of the building is to the chairman of the Commission and includes his name. He said that with the title he feels a strong responsibility for the structure and concern for how the building is treated. We are all here as individuals who are history fanatics and love the history of Comstock. We have run into problems because of the way the building is recorded: it is not in the inventory of state office buildings and grounds, and therefore, they do not feel any responsibility to take care of the building. He said, I am currently your buildings and grounds guy. We have had to do some things that the Fire Marshall requested, a few other

minor things, and putting up TV sets. With the help of Art and Robin we have the system working. I do not think most people realize how the building was titled and who is responsible. Maybe we should be talking to the County and seeing how we can work together on this.

Joe Curtis asked for any other comments. Hearing none, he said he would entertain a motion concerning the Commission to enter discussion with the County to authorize the chairman to explore and negotiate an agreement with Storey County to provide contract services including potential staffing to the Comstock Historic District to be brought back to the Commission for consideration at a future date.

Mercedes de la Garza asked if Joe would be the only person who would be negotiating. Joe Curtis said the Commission would appoint some type of committee, probably one other person to work with him. He said it cannot be Clay due to conflict of interest. He said that initially he would meet with Austin Osborne, see where this is going, and then pull someone in to have the discussion with him. Mercedes said OK, thank you. Joe said he would entertain a motion.

Julie Workman moved to authorize the CHDC Chair to pursue a potential arrangement with Storey County to provide staffing administrative and support services to the Comstock Historic District Commission in exchange for use of Commission facilities as office space and to bring any resulting proposed agreement back to the Commission at a future meeting for consideration and possible approval. Calvin Dillion seconded the motion. Joe asked if there was any more discussion before we called for a vote. Mercedes asked, can we just dilute that sentence that says provide staffing, administrative and support so we can develop that relationship a little bit broader in the next phase? Also, take off the word staffing and say administrative and support services? Nancy Cleaves suggested that it says, contract, administrative and support services. Mercedes agreed and asked about the idea of making money. She said, if we are talking about an exchange, does that mean we are not going to charge the County, and that maybe she misunderstood about having an income source for the building from the County. Joe said that would be part of the discussion and that they are not that far along. Mercedes said she is not opposed to doing this, she just wants to make sure it is fluid enough for the Commission to have some wiggle room to shape things. Sara Sturtz said it is a potential arrangement. Joe agreed there is potential for discussion before coming to conclusions about how to do this.

Mercedes said she would prefer the language to be modified slightly to make it a little broader. Joe asked if they had a suggestion for the verbiage. Mercedes said Nancy's suggestion to provide contracting, administrative and support to the CHDC and something else for exchange for use of the building, because it sounds like we will let you use the building if you give us people for use of the Commission facilities as office space. Joe said he jotted that down and it would be part of the discussions. Mercedes said she was looking for broader language. Joe asked if the motion is made more fluid to involve other aspects. Mercedes said if the words "in exchange" are taken out, it makes it broader. Joe said OK we can do that. Julie Workman withdrew her motion.

Clay Mitchell offered the following potential motion; I move to authorize the CHDC chair to pursue a potential arrangement with Storey County to provide services to CHDC for use of Commission facilities as office space and to bring any resulting proposed agreement back to the Commission at a future meeting for consideration and possible approval. Mercedes replied, so moved. Nancy Cleaves seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT.

Joe Curtis stated that public comments may be limited to 3 minutes per person at the discretion of the chair for specific agenda items. Comment will not be restricted based on the viewpoint. No action will be taken on any matters raised during the public comment period that are not already on the agenda. All those providing comments are asked to begin by stating their full name for the record. The Chair opened the floor to the public for comment.

Claude Sendon thanked Commissioner Mitchell for correcting his name in the October meeting minutes.

Shelly Smith, former district officer, wished everyone a happy holiday and said she was happy with the way the meeting turned out. Shelly thanked Robin and Art for all their effort.

ADJOURNMENT.

Joe Curtis motioned to adjourn, and the motion carried unanimously.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 6:14 pm

Minutes transcribed by Kimberly Johnston from the recording and reviewed by Joe Curtis.