TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 22, 2026

TRPA/ZOOM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

   Chair Ms. Williamson called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

   Members present: Ms. Aldean, Ms. Bennett (for Mr. Aguilar), Mr. Bass, Ms. Conrad-Saydah, Ms. Holloway (for Ms. Gustafson), Mr. Guthreau, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman, Mr. Kieckhefer, Ms. Laine, Ms. Leumer, Mr. Rice, Ms. Williamson

   Members absent: Ms. Faustinos, Ms. Hays

   Ms. Williamson introduced new Governing Board member, and new Director of the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Vinson Guthreau.

   Mr. Guthreau appreciated the warm welcome and is looking forward to working with everyone on the Governing Board. He was appointed by Governor Lombardo effective March 30th.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC INTEREST COMMENTS – ON AGENDA ITEMS

   None.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

   Ms. Regan stated that there were no changes to the agenda.
   Ms. Williamson deemed the agenda approved as posted.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   Ms. Aldean made a motion to approve the March 25, 2026 minutes as presented.
   Motion carried-voice vote.

6. TRPA CONSENT CALENDAR

   A. City of South Lake Tahoe Solar Carport Project, Turnkey Energy, 1352 Johnson Blvd., City of South Lake Tahoe, California, Assessor's Parcel Numbers 025-010-021 and 025-010-023, TRPA File Number ERSP2025-0847
   B. Lowering the Placer County Individual Parcel Evaluation System (IPES) Buildable Line
   C. Governing Board Committee Membership Appointment

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Board Comments & Questions Item No. 6.A

None.

Board Comments & Questions Item No. 6.B

None.

Board Comments & Questions Item No. 6.C

None.

Ms. Laine made a motion to approve the TRPA Consent Calendar.

Ayes: Ms. Aldean, Ms. Bennett (for Mr. Aguilar), Mr. Bass, Ms. Holloway (for Ms. Gustafson), Mr. Guthreau, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman, Mr. Kieckhefer, Ms. Laine, Ms. Leumer, Mr. Rice, Ms. Williamson

Absent: Ms. Conrad-Saydah, Ms. Faustinos
Motion carried.

Ms. Hill made a motion to adjourn as the TRPA and convene as the TMPO.
Motion carried-voice vote.

7. TMPO CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Final Draft FY 2026/27 Lake Tahoe Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP)

Ms. Hill said the Transportation Committee recommended approval of item 7.A. The Overall Work Program was reviewed by the Tahoe Transportation District and the Transportation Committee didn't have any comments. Staff did a great job, and we're excited to implement.

Ms. Hill made a motion to approve the TMPO Consent Calendar.

Ayes: Ms. Aldean, Ms. Bennett (for Mr. Aguilar), Mr. Bass, Ms. Holloway (for Ms. Gustafson), Mr. Guthreau, Ms. Hill, Mr. Hoenigman, Mr. Kieckhefer, Ms. Laine, Ms. Leumer, Mr. Rice, Ms. Williamson

Absent: Ms. Conrad-Saydah, Ms. Faustinos
Motion carried.

Ms. Hill made a motion to adjourn as the TMPO and reconvene as the TRPA.

Motion carried-voice vote.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

A. Presentation on the process and design standards for area-wide stormwater/complete streets infrastructure

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Ms. Regan said it's fitting that we start our Planning Matters item on Earth Day with water quality. We have ten environmental threshold categories, things like water quality, air quality, scenic recreation, etc. We talked about the transportation Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) standards this morning at the committee. But clarity is our what rallies this community keeping Lake Tahoe pristine and in an environment that is different than other areas. When a new subdivision is built, there are stormwater systems and complete streets that are part of that. We do not do subdivisions in Tahoe which was prohibited more than 55 years ago.

The first TRPA Governing Board meeting was held in March of 1970. So Earth Day coincides when the board formulated. And at that point the fear was runaway development and we had this parcel-by-parcel focus for Lake Tahoe. We've evolved over the last 55 plus years, and we're looking at a scale that's necessary to solve the challenges that we have for lake clarity. We're in pursuit of our water clarity target of getting back to close to 100 feet of clarity, which is what it was in the 1960s. In 2012 when we did the Regional Plan Update, we had the benefit of ten years of science that the two states led with the US Environmental Protection Agency under what's called the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) which is part of the Clean Water Act nomenclature. The TMDL science told us that not every drop of runoff is created equal in our in our basin. And we need to prioritize where the biggest runoff is to get the biggest bang for the buck if we ever want to solve the clarity problems that are plaguing Lake Tahoe.

We embedded in the Regional Plan update this idea of what we call area wide treatments because Tahoe developed in small cabin after small cabin, and individual parcels. Over time, we didn't have that infrastructure. So, we're going back and trying to achieve that and that is what we're getting to. The partnerships with local jurisdictions are essential because we will rely on the municipalities to either build and or maintain these systems. Ms. Navarro has been doing an incredible job convening a big partnership around this because it's very much tied to our housing goals as well, because land use, housing, and water quality go hand in hand.

TRPA staff Ms. Navarro, Watersheds and Water Quality Program Manager provided the presentation.

The presentation is intended to familiarize you with the work being done, particularly in advance of the Governing Board retreat next month, where you will see references to this work in the program.

Protecting water quality has always been central to TRPA’s purpose. To that end, the agency has implemented various policies and regulations, including requiring stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) on all developed properties in the Tahoe Basin. These measures are designed to infiltrate runoff and reduce water quality impacts to the lake. However, as noted, ten years of science that informed Tahoe’s Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) identified the need for strategies beyond parcel-level BMPs to improve lake clarity. Area-wide stormwater treatment provides an alternative approach. It uses a watershed-based strategy and offers flexibility to treat runoff from both private property and public rights-of-way collectively, rather than parcel by parcel.

In a parcel-based system, private properties and public rights-of-way are treated separately and improvements typically stop at property boundaries, often leaving sections of the public right-of-way untreated and contributing sediment. In contrast, a watershed-based system treats

stormwater collectively. Runoff is directed through infrastructure such as curbs and gutters to treatment facilities, where pollutants are removed before the water is infiltrated into groundwater or released as cleaner surface water into the lake.

Initially, area-wide treatment in Tahoe was used in locations with special circumstances, such as high groundwater or bedrock conditions that prevented standard infiltration. Examples include the Bijou Erosion Control Project, Cave Rock, and the Tahoe City wetlands. With the development of the TMDL, research showed that not all parcels contribute equally to runoff, due to differences in land use, property characteristics, and proximity to the lake. As a result, the 2012 Regional Plan expanded area-wide treatment to allow its use in any location, provided it delivers equal or greater water quality benefits compared to parcel-level BMPs. The plan also introduced funding mechanisms that allow property owners to pay fees in lieu of on-site infiltration. Area-wide systems also improve maintenance efficiency, as public agencies can manage infrastructure more effectively than tracking and enforcing maintenance across thousands of individual properties.

More recently, Phase Two housing amendments further advanced area-wide treatment by allowing additional coverage for affordable and workforce housing, provided those projects are part of a stormwater system operated and maintained by a local jurisdiction. Project proponents have expressed a need for clearer guidance on how to comply with these requirements, and this presentation provides an update on implementation progress. A structured process has been established to implement area-wide treatment plans in accordance with TRPA code. The first step involves pollutant load reduction modeling to determine whether existing infrastructure meets required treatment levels and aligns with TMDL crediting methodologies. If additional treatment is needed, the next step is developing a conceptual plan that can integrate stormwater improvements with other benefits such as transportation, parking, habitat restoration, and environmental improvements.

This is followed by detailed design at the permitting level, including defining operations, maintenance responsibilities, fee structures, and any interim measures needed during the transition from parcel-level to area-wide systems. Approval may occur at the staff or board level, depending on the scope of the project. Finally, documentation is recorded in the BMP database, tracking participation and maintenance status across properties.

An example of this approach is the Ski Run Mountain to Marina area-wide treatment plan. This urban neighborhood has greater infrastructure demands and limited space on individual parcels, making area-wide treatment more effective than parcel-based solutions. The plan identifies constrained areas and shifts infiltration opportunities higher in the watershed to achieve equal or improved water quality outcomes, while also incorporating additional benefits like transportation improvements and restoration.

Currently, there are six active area-wide treatment systems in the basin, with additional projects in development, including efforts in Placer County focused on priority watersheds in the Kings Beach and Dollar Hill areas. TRPA has also allocated funding to develop engineering standards for stormwater and complete streets infrastructure. These standards will support permitting and design efforts for area-wide systems. A working group, including local stormwater and public works staff, has been convened to compile and refine design details suitable for Tahoe's conditions. This effort emphasizes infiltration-focused designs, winter resilience, snowplow compatibility, sediment management, and appropriate vegetation for the local climate.

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In summary, TRPA has supported area-wide treatment for some time, with recent policy updates further advancing its use particularly in support of housing and water quality goals. A clear implementation process is now in place, along with dedicated resources to develop design standards and promote multi-benefit projects.

Board Comments & Questions

Mr. Hoenigman asked if we have any documentation that shows us where we'd like to see these projects implemented and what the total build-out cost might be.

Ms. Navarro said when we originally started this, we did a regional analysis to look at where area-wide treatment was feasible and desired. That looked at locations where there was existing infrastructure already in place, as well as locations that had these special circumstances or site constraints. With the advent of the new phase two housing allowances and code language the location of where we want to see area wide will expand. We've been working directly with each of the local jurisdictions to further that. As far as total cost, it depends on the situation and what type of treatment is being looked at implemented.

The Bijou project in South Lake Tahoe has a very elaborate pump and treatment system where water is collected and pumped upstream. So that's going to be significantly more expensive than something like the Tahoe City wetlands private properties who treat their runoff and then release it where it can flow by gravity down to the Tahoe City wetlands for additional polishing.

With our in-lieu fee allowance in the code, which provides a revenue source and mechanism by which the local jurisdictions can capture funding from the private properties. They can collect fees in lieu of those private properties, installing infiltrating infrastructure directly on their parcel. There is a way to help fund costs depending on what the situation is potentially installation, but operation and maintenance, which is always a challenge for local jurisdiction public works staff to maintain these projects over time.

Ms. Holloway said this is a great idea and feasible but it does come at a significant cost. We've been looking at our systems that we maintain on the North Shore, specifically in the Kings Beach area, which were put in as related to the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project. That project was sized for the roadway runoff predominantly. There's some pressure on us to look at the availability of capacity there, which there is limited capacity for private property. Also, getting creative on the potential for retrofit and or new construction related to that. We're cautiously supportive because I know how much these types of below ground infrastructure systems cost, especially here in Tahoe. I appreciate the effort but there needs to be a lot more conversation around funding.

Ms. Caringer said putting a plug in for the Environmental Improvement Program and the tracking we do through that. Regarding the question on how are you able to see what projects are prioritized? Where are they going to be? What funding do they need? How much progress are we making? We do track a full program of work through the EIP of stormwater projects and forest health projects. That shows us what's in the hopper, where they're prioritized and what we need. We track that online through the EIP Tracker. We also have working groups in each of these focus areas. There's the Stormwater Quality Improvement Committee (SWQIC) which is all different

jurisdictions talking about where this makes sense to implement these types of projects. Where, what, when and the funding needs.

Ms. Conrad-Saydah said that's a perfect tee up to my comment. With upper watershed management, you can delay or slow the amount of water coming into our stormwater treatment systems. So, spending those resources on improving forest health does pay dividends in terms of reducing the total cost of necessary stormwater treatment. Of course, there are first flush storms and big storm events that you need that type of infrastructure.

There's been a lot of new technology over the last five years in capturing and treating solids in stormwater runoff including doing some carbon capture work to help finance these projects. There's a couple of interesting projects that have come out of the University of Colorado Boulder and the University of California Merced to think about how to reduce the overall cost of those types of infrastructure investments. I'd be happy to follow up with Ms. Navarro offline on this.

Ms. Navarro said in response to Ms. Holloway's comments, last week we kicked off the first step doing the pollutant load reduction modeling for the two priority watersheds in Placer County, Kings Beach, and Dollar Hill. We're at the start of that process to evaluate the existing infrastructure and see what level of treatment it gives us versus everyone doing parcel BMPs. That neighborhood is also constrained due to slow soils, and a lot of the parcels are very tiny, making it challenging for them to implement parcel BMPs. As part of that analysis, we look at all public parcels, whether it's Forest Service parcels, the California Tahoe Conservancy parcels or parcels owned by the county for opportunities. As Ms. Conrad-Saydah mentioned, where are these opportunities to infiltrate or treat higher up in the watershed so that not everything is all going down to the existing infrastructure that's part of your commercial corridor area.

Ms. Laine said the presentation mentioned six water retention basins that we have, at least here on the south shore. The big one that you mentioned was the Bijou pump and treat, have we gone back to look at if it is doing what we want? Because I know that there's a huge water retention basin near Walkup Road in South Lake Tahoe and it's never wet. The idea of that Bijou pumping station was that it was supposed to capture the water down by CVS in vaults and through various sifting operations, you get the water without the sediment to be pumped back up to the retention basin that I mentioned. But it's always dry. In 2023 it was dry and that was a big winter In 2026, it's dry. When we talk about whether they are appropriately sized, are we going back and looking at the ones we built and figuring out which ones are working and which ones were oversized?

Ms. Navarro said the local jurisdictions if they're getting TMDL credit for those projects, which in this case the City of South Lake Tahoe does for Bijou. They have specific protocols to evaluate every year that they're getting credit for them. They have something called BMP RAM, Rapid Assessment methodology to make sure that whatever basin is infiltrating as it's intended. If not, that affects how much credit that the local jurisdiction gets. And all of the maintenance interval information is provided to the state and that goes into the crediting. I can't necessarily speak anecdotally of it being dry or wet. I know that in big events, the pumps do kick off and water gets delivered to those basins for sure. It's not all the time because it's a smaller event or slower runoff from melting of snow. There are protocols in place to evaluate them.

Our design storm is the 20-year, one hour storm. That's larger than most jurisdictions in North America. We have the first flush, most pollutants in stormwater are in the initial pulse of water.

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Then anything after is more just flowing through. But we have a larger size because of rain on snow events we want to make sure that basins have the capacity to deal with those situations. In the 2012 Regional Plan, which was something that was looked at and was determined to be that our size was adequate. We didn't feel like we had to increase the size because there's a point of diminishing returns that even if you go larger, you're not necessarily providing additional treatment. So we stayed with that size, but it is bigger than most other places just because of our unique climate conditions here.

Ms. Regan said our Threshold Standard for water clarity is 97 feet and we're trying to get back to about 100 feet of clarity like the 1960s. When we adopted that TMDL we set an interim target to get to 80 feet through the clarity challenge. We all collectively, as a basin, set a goal to reduce the amount of fine sediments, nitrogen and phosphorus that would flow into the lake. Every one of these pieces of infrastructure is tracked by the local jurisdictions. They're measuring how much they're removing of this fine sediment, the nitrogen, and the phosphorus. In turn they get these credits to meet their permit conditions or their agreements with the states. It's a complicated system, but at a big picture level, like each of these are being analyzed to say, how are we doing today? Because what we're finding in clarity work is that we are taking a lot of pollutants out of the lake, but things are changing with the lake. And that's where we're leaning in on the Tahoe Science Advisory Council to find out as the lake is warming, as species are changing in the lake, are these systems designed correctly? That work is going on to make sure that we're sizing them correctly and that they're designed correctly. There are new technologies that are emerging and we're working with the partners on that.

Douglas County is studying a stormwater assessment in their jurisdiction looking at potentially setting a new fee that would support stormwater infrastructure in Douglas County in both the basin and the Valley. That was groundbreaking in terms of stormwater assessment, which is common in a lot of other municipalities. We've never had one like that set up in the basin because our utility providers deliver water and treat wastewater and they're not treating stormwater as part of the utility systems. We have to go back and build these systems much later than other jurisdictions have, just because of the way Tahoe developed and its history.

Ms. Navarro said the work that's done at the EIP working group Stormwater Quality Improvement Committee (SWQIC) has had discussions with all the jurisdictions about the importance of having more of a treatment train to pull out course material, because that facilitates maintenance. Our pollutant of concern is ultrafine sediment and want to make sure that infiltration basins do their job to pull out that fine sediment. The Tahoe Resource Conservation District is working on a study evaluating the effectiveness of adding biochar to basins to help maintain infiltration, pull out other fine sediments and, pollutants. In the Bourne Meadow area of Douglas County there are two basins that they're going to be able to look at side by side, one with biochar and one without evaluating that effectiveness.

Ms. Conrad-Saydah said the American Forest Foundation is working in Tuolumne County on an application to do some forest clearing for wildfire resilience treatment. They turn the residue into biochar that they then turn back into the soil and produce a bunch of ecosystem services, wildfire risk reduction, and insurability for the community. It would be great to think about a broader project that connects all of this. Also, Blue Forest is doing some of the downstream water benefit quantification on that.

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Ms. Holloway put in a plug for the Placer County effort on biomass outside the basin. Our Cabin Creek facility is establishing a biomass plant there, which will produce biochar locally as well.

B. Demonstration of new permitting tools

Ms. Regan said we're giving you an update on an ongoing project that's part of our improvements to permit processing. You've heard many presentations over the years. We've evaluated our fees, for example, to make sure that we're striving toward our goal of cost recovery and this is the next evolution. Ms. Self has been a leader in this work supported by our science and data team. One of the things we wanted to talk about is our pilot and looking at the use of artificial intelligence in our permitting to help us be more efficient and effective, attain and maintain our thresholds and improve our overall public service.

It's a big conversation that we're having internally as an agency. I'm sure all of the circles that you operate in with your constituencies also have these conversations about environmental concerns about the use of artificial intelligence. We've been engaging through our monthly Learning Labs around what's appropriate, developing new policies for our staff.

We need to make sure that accuracy reigns because anyone who has used AI knows there's a lot of misinformation and inaccurate information out there. Part of what we're doing is making sure that we're training AI to be correct. We've been very clear at TRPA that we're not bringing in artificial intelligence to reduce the size of our workforce because what we do requires human action.

Nothing is simple and straightforward in the world that we live in, in Lake Tahoe, and we rely on the technical expertise of our staff, which is immense. Anything that we use in terms of artificial intelligence will require human oversight. When we do use AI in piloting, we're limiting it to the use of our plan and code and not the entire internet. We believe being specific on the scope also limits the amount of resources that are used in the process.

TRPA staff Ms. Self, Principal Planner Permitting & Compliance Department provided the presentation.

We're going to give you a preview of some of the tools we're developing at TRPA to support our permitting process. These tools are still under development and we'll walk you through what they are and why they're important.

Permitting and Compliance is the largest department at TRPA, with 22 staff members. We review, permit, and inspect private projects throughout the Lake Tahoe region. On average, our team processes about 1,200 permitting applications and 1,500 tree removal applications annually. We also advise and support three other jurisdictions that issue TRPA permits under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) delegation.

Permitting is one of our key mechanisms for achieving and maintaining environmental thresholds. Every regulation in our code of ordinances ties directly to an environmental standard. An efficient and predictable permitting process benefits both the lake and project applicants by ensuring development complies with regulations.

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Projects completed in compliance with TRPA code help achieve environmental gains through green infrastructure, stormwater systems, scenic improvements, alternative transportation, and protection and restoration of sensitive land.

When evaluating improvements to our permitting system, our objectives are multi-faceted. We aim to provide better customer service, ensure more complete and compliant applications, and gain valuable insights from the process itself.

Permitting in Tahoe is complex. While the overall goals of protecting the lake, managing runoff, limiting development footprint, and restoring sensitive areas are easy to understand, the regulatory details can be difficult to navigate.

For example, a homeowner wanting to build an addition or Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) must consider zoning, design guidelines, height, and setbacks. In Tahoe, they must also determine land capability, existing versus grandfathered coverage, eligibility for exemptions, coverage transfers, mitigation fees, and whether TRPA or a local jurisdiction handles the permit. These layers make the process complicated and often lead to “it depends” answers.

A significant part of TRPA’s role is education. Staff regularly assist applicants through phone calls, virtual meetings, and in-person appointments. Our intake team ensures applications are complete before they move forward.

The tools we’re developing will complement and not replace this human support. Think of them as a guided system, similar to TurboTax, helping users understand what’s possible, what to consider in project design, and how to submit an application. Staff will still be available for assistance when needed.

It’s important to clarify what we mean by AI in this context. Unlike generative AI that pulls from broad internet sources, these tools operate within a closed system using only TRPA-specific data. This includes our code, rules and procedures, design guidelines, area plans, GIS data, and parcel history. The tools rely on the same authoritative sources that staff use.

These tools are fundamentally about data integration bringing together complex regulatory information to provide faster, clearer answers in real time. We are partnering with Emulate Cities, a company specializing in AI tools for permitting and local government. Their team brings strong expertise in planning, policy, and artificial intelligence, and we’re grateful for their collaboration.

Looking at the permitting process, applicants typically move through several stages: pre-application, application submittal, review and permitting, construction and inspection, and post-project monitoring.

Our current focus is on the early stages, pre-application, and application submittal where we see the greatest bottlenecks. Many applicants struggle with where to start and what is required. Approximately 70 percent of residential applications are incomplete at some point, often due to missing information. The first tool, the pre-application assistant, helps users determine whether they need a TRPA permit and what considerations apply to their project. By entering an address and answering guided questions, users receive tailored information based on TRPA data similar to speaking with a planner.

The second tool focuses on application submittal. It guides users through required materials and can review uploaded documents, such as site plans, to check for completeness. It provides real-time feedback on missing components, reducing back-and-forth between applicants and staff.

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Currently, applicants rely on static PDFs and guidance documents. This often leads to incomplete submissions and delays. These tools aim to provide immediate, interactive feedback to improve application quality before submission.

It's important to emphasize that TRPA staff remain the final authority on all permitting decisions. These tools are designed to streamline the process and improve efficiency, not replace human review. The tools demonstrated today are still in development. The next phase includes testing with partner jurisdictions and refining functionality. The goal is to potentially launch the pre-application tool later this year.

This effort is part of a broader initiative to improve all stages of the permitting process. We're also learning from other jurisdictions. For example, similar tools are being developed for design review assistance, code interpretation chatbots, and housing feasibility analysis in other communities. Internally, we are continuing discussions about how to responsibly implement AI, including defining strict data boundaries and ensuring transparency for both staff and the public.

Board Comments & Questions

Ms. Aldean said I'm pleased that there will be beta testing before the tool is launched. Is the AI assistant going to be optional or required before interacting with staff? It's important that there remains an option for people who are not comfortable using AI to still access staff directly.

Ms. Self said that's been a major part of the conversation as we develop these tools. It's very important to us that there is always an option to exit the AI assistant and speak directly with a person. Maintaining access to face-to-face interaction with a permitting technician or planner is a priority. Our customer service team is highly experienced, Bridget Cornell, who handles incoming phone calls, has over 30 years of experience so applicants are getting knowledgeable support for their questions. We also offer both virtual and in-person appointments, so people can choose what works best for them. If someone prefers to speak directly with a person, that option will absolutely remain available.

Mr. Guthreau thanked staff for the presentation. Board member Aldean asked my question, but I do have one comment. There's a major shift toward AI and continuing to focus on enhancing existing procedures as you've been doing, is a great approach. Maintaining that human touch makes it even more valuable.

Ms. Conrad-Saydah said one thing to be aware of is that the cost of using an AI tool in creating and deploying it, operating it from a fiscal and ecosystem services standpoint, and the natural resources demand of operating AI. Is there an opportunity to put a small fee on the use of the pre-application checklist, for example, a $25 to $50 fee that allows people to go through the process a little faster. When this is developed, they go through the process faster, and then that fee goes into the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) to potentially do watershed improvements that offset the water and energy demand for running an AI based tool.

Additionally, if it's not AI based and it's a software-based tool that's just embedded within our systems and isn't crawling larger areas, you can reduce that demand. Staff should consider this as you go through the development. Because we could be making things worse in allowing rampant AI use. I agree that there should be a faster way of getting to permitting and there should be

something much more streamlined. It's just a matter of how we do it. I know there's a lot of people trying to create data centers to run on solar or renewables, but that's not happening fast enough. We don't want to undercut the good work we're doing in our EIP program by deploying a tool that demands more water and energy than is necessary.

Ms. Self said we've been having a lot of internal dialogue. We are environmental agency and we're making sure that any action that we're taking is ethical and responsible.

Mr. Bindl, TRPA Senior GIS Analyst, Science and Data Department said AI is a loaded term and a lot of this is just a query. The opportunity we've had with this process improvement project is for Ms. Self and I to work together to find where data integration needs to happen. A lot of this will be software that lives in our server room. When the novel piece of technology reads a site plan, we could think about what that costs environmentally.

Ms. Conrad-Saydah said if the focus is more on the application of a software that reduces a lot of my concerns.

Ms. Leumer echoed Ms. Conrad-Saydah's comments and is something to be mindful of. I appreciate you framing this as a win win. We've been having a lot of conversations, at least in California, about permitting and streamlining. And sometimes the proposed answer is we should just get rid of environmental laws altogether and then we can be a lot faster. I appreciate keeping them in place but finding more efficient and ways to make sure it's going faster and it's an easier experience for everyone involved.

Ms. Regan said this what we were hoping to hear from all of you. I wanted to echo Ms. Self's point that we're on a continuum here. Last Friday, I did the Howie Nave morning radio show, and you never know what type of questions will be received from the callers. We had feedback thanking TRPA for working on our permitting over the years. A caller stated that they used to have a hard time and they've had great customer service and excellent help navigating a complicated permitting system. So, we got unsolicited positive feedback. This is due to the staff that we have and the drive for continuous improvement. When I started here more than 20 years ago, that was probably one of the top concerns that we heard from the community. The permitting is too convoluted and it's a ping pong between the local jurisdictions and TRPA.

The Regional Plan was very much designed to improve that through area planning and streamlining procedures. The Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the jurisdictions. We are continually working to improve embracing technology when we can but doing it in a very thoughtful manner. We send our staff to conferences around the use of AI in public space and government agencies. We're looking at best practices for internal policies about even just which ones to query when we're trying to solve work problems. We're developing an in-house policy around the use of AI just for our staff.

I want to give a big complement to our team who are working hard to improve the service to the public to make it simpler. We find when our project applicants understand the reason behind the rules to protect the lake, and we can make it simple and streamlined for them, we're going to get better compliance overall and we're going to make progress on our thresholds.

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Ms. Hill said I'm also excited about this new tool. On the back end for other jurisdictions or other folks who do permitting approvals, are they able to access it or do you send them a PDF of the full package?

Ms. Self said for the actual application itself is a conversation that we want to have with our MOU partners to decide what works. In an ideal world, if there was a central portal where someone could find out whether it's a TRPA permit or application needed. And whether it's reviewed at Washoe County, the City of South Lake Tahoe, or TRPA, it would go into our systems. These tools have that capability. But those are questions that we need to have with our MOU partners to see if it works with their processes. And then also working with our stakeholders and the public as we move along in this process.

Ms. Bennett asked if on the back end, are you pulling the permitting information and all of the other information from your own places and from all the NEC's California rules, regulations, and laws to get that information for the AI.

Also, if the AI can't answer the questions, will the AI or bot send an email to TRPA planning staff to reach out because something got stopped?

Mr. Bindl said the opportunity has been to create data integrations and data services in traditionally siloed systems and expose that to this tool but also connect those systems in meaningful ways. It's going to help our MOU partners because those data services can be reused. Things such as the Lake Tahoe Info Parcel Tracker have been a system of record that we've been able to leverage. Building that foundation of data is exactly what we've done. Any of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) data has been pulled into our enterprise systems and exposed to this tool.

It's been fenced off and those are the specific data sources and authoritative systems of record that the tool is looking at.

Regarding the second question, the flag happens immediately. It's that immediate feedback of you might have to look at this further or talk to a planner. The applicant sees that in real time and the planner also sees that if the applicant gets halfway through a submittal and wants to speak to a person. Everybody has visibility into the results of how the pre-application went. But if you wanted to email that to somebody, we could think about that.

Ms. Bennett said or having a planner contact the person back. It would be great if we're not looking at the AI tool being the one and only thing that they're utilizing, but it's letting us know to get back to the person also.

Ms. Self said that's a great suggestion as we're building this prototype. Hopefully, those will come through the beta testing and we'll receive that feedback from the members of the public.

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9. APPEALS

A. Vote on Motion for Reconsideration of Appeal of Denial of Moody Boat Ramp/Pier Conversion and Transfer Project, 181 Yellow Jacket Road, Douglas County, Nevada, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 1418-10-401-004, TRPA File Number ERSP2023-1834; Appeal File Number ADMIN2025-0016

Motion withdrawn

10. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

A. Executive Director Status Report

Ms. Regan said Happy Earth Day. We do not always hold board meetings on Earth Day itself, which began on April 22, 1970. Our team has been out participating in celebrations throughout the region. The South Shore held its Earth Day festivities last Saturday and the North Shore celebration will be this coming weekend. These events are a great opportunity for us to celebrate the work we do in service to the lake, our mission, and our communities. It is also meaningful to reflect on the timing of TRPA's origins. President Nixon signed the Compact in December 1969, and the first TRPA board meeting was convened in Carson City in March 1970, right at the beginning of the Earth Day movement.

I would also like to recognize National Administrative Professionals Day, three of whom are sitting at the table today making this meeting happen. Thank you for everything you do. We truly could not accomplish our work without your support and dedication.

Today, the Board approved another solar project in the City of South Lake Tahoe. Just a few years ago, the Board approved what was then the largest solar project in the basin at the South Tahoe Public Utility District plant. In a few weeks, we will celebrate the completion of that project. We are continuing to make meaningful progress on important projects throughout the basin.

Last Saturday also marked another major milestone: the grand opening of the Recreation and Aquatic Center in the City of South Lake Tahoe. This incredible new facility is 65,000-square-foot recreation complex, including everything from an indoor batting cage and lap pool to a lazy river for children, fitness equipment, and a large gymnasium capable of hosting multiple basketball games simultaneously. Many of us were genuinely moved by the event because it was inspiring to see the community so excited and engaged. The center was packed, with an estimated 750 to 1,000 residents attending.

I would like to acknowledge Mayor Bass, our city partners, and former City Manager Joe Irvin, whose hard work helped to make this project possible. The community approved measures increasing hotel and sales taxes, allowing the city to bond approximately $80 million to fund this investment. For a community of fewer than 30,000 people on the South Shore, a facility like this is remarkable. It demonstrates how tourism can be leveraged to directly benefit local communities. The facility is also accessible for individuals and children with disabilities, which makes it even more meaningful.

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The Interim Oversight Committee for TRPA and the Nevada Legislature recently toured the basin on April 10. Despite snowy conditions in the morning, the weather cleared, allowing for an excellent tour from Incline Village along the Highway 28 corridor to Sand Harbor. The committee learned about transportation initiatives, sustainable recreation, destination stewardship, and the innovative reservation system being implemented to better manage visitor demand at one of Lake Tahoe's most treasured natural resources.

We have three additional meetings of the Interim Oversight Committee scheduled, including two here at TRPA and a final meeting in Carson City in August, where bill drafts will be considered. The committee consists of eight members of the Nevada Legislature and is chaired by Heather Goulding of northern Nevada.

In Sacramento, the issue of Golden Mussels continues to receive significant attention. The California Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee is considering multiple bills related to aquatic invasive species. Tahoe's prevention efforts are increasingly recognized as a model for the state, and our Government Affairs Manager, Devin Middlebrook, will testify before the legislature this week. Keeping Golden Mussels out of Lake Tahoe remains a top priority. Unlike Quagga Mussels, which are often associated with motorized boats, Golden Mussels can also spread through non-motorized watercraft such as kayaks, paddleboards, and even inner tubes. That message is still relatively new for many visitors, and we are working hard to raise awareness through outreach and cleaning stations around the lake.

You will also find the latest edition of *Tahoe In Depth* at your seats. The publication is mailed directly to every homeowner in the basin, with thousands of additional copies distributed throughout the region. This issue includes updates on forest health standards, transportation projects, invasive species prevention, and reminders to clean recreational gear before launching into the lake.

I also want to welcome our newest board member, Vince Guthreau, and thank him for immediately jumping into committee work and board service. On the staffing side, we recently posted the recruitment announcement for a new Deputy Director and Chief Planning Officer as John Hester prepares to retire in September. While John is truly irreplaceable, we are casting a wide net in hopes of attracting exceptional candidates. We are also recruiting for several additional positions, including an assistant planner, inspector, public service specialist, and summer interns. We received nearly 100 applications for the assistant planner position, which speaks to the strong interest people have in working at TRPA.

Finally, I want to recognize the completion of the Fanny Bridge project in Tahoe City. This long-anticipated effort involved replacing the century-old bridge, constructing new roundabouts, and improving access to the West Shore, including critical evacuation routes for wildfire emergencies. The project was completed in a historically sensitive manner and required years of coordination, multiple construction phases, and significant federal funding. Special recognition goes to Placer County for successfully guiding this complex project to completion.

As a final reminder, nominations for the Best in the Basin awards remain open for another week. Please encourage your communities to submit outstanding projects for consideration. We are also advancing plans for the new Meyers Watercraft Inspection Station, which may include co-located affordable housing on Conservancy-owned land near the Highway 50 roundabout.

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Please also mark your calendars for our May board meeting and retreat at Granlibakken on the North Shore following Memorial Day. It will be an important week of collaboration and planning as we continue advancing critical work across the Tahoe Basin.

B. General Counsel Status Report

Mr. St. Michel said I usually use these reports to provide updates on our active cases. For our new board member, Mr. Guthreau, I'll give another overview. We currently have four active cases, which I'll review in the order they were filed.

The oldest case is Eisenstecken v. TRPA, which involves a challenge to TRPA's approval of a cell tower. There was some encouraging progress on this matter during the legal committee meeting this morning. We have spent more than half a year pursuing settlement options, and the legal committee provided directions to move forward with a conditional settlement agreement. That process will involve advancing a draft ordinance through the public process to establish new standards for stealthing monopine facilities, specifically those that use plastic needles. We plan to bring the draft ordinance before the Advisory Planning Commission in May, and then, if all goes well, the Governing Board will review it in June. We are hopeful this will finally bring an end to this long-running litigation, which was originally filed in 2020.

The next case involves TRPA in more of an enforcement role. We brought this action against operators of unpermitted boat rentals. The defendants operate a boat rental concession without the required permit. Under our code, commercial boat rentals must operate out of marinas, but these operators move between beaches picking people up, which is not allowed. We have worked for a long time to pursue enforcement action against them. They are already subject to a contempt order and have remained noncompliant. We also have an outstanding judgment against them. As we prepare for the upcoming boating season, the court has requested substantial documentation and effort on our part to continue moving the case forward. Our team is continuing that work and is well positioned to achieve stronger enforcement results this year.

The third case is more recent and involves an individual who sued TRPA after we denied his buoy permit application. In our regulatory framework, it is very difficult to obtain a permit associated with a non-littoral parcel, and this individual owns a non-littoral parcel. His appeal went through the Governing Board process, and the Board upheld the staff decision denying the permit. He is now seeking judicial review of that decision. The plaintiff is expected to file a motion for summary judgment in mid-May, after which we will file our own motion. We hope to have the case fully briefed by the end of the summer. This matter is notable because we also have a pending appeal involving a very similar issue with another non-littoral parcel owner seeking a buoy permit. The Board may see a related matter come forward later this summer.

The final case is very recent and was brought by Douglas Flaherty, a regular participant at these meetings and a concerned citizen from the Incline Village area. Mr. Flaherty filed suit against TRPA regarding its approval of Washoe County's Area Plan amendments, which were intended to conform to the TRPA Regional Plan. These amendments are primarily related to housing. Mr. Flaherty alleges that the agency failed to conduct adequate environmental review as part of the approval process. The case is still in its early stages, and our team is currently preparing the administrative record. We will appear before the court later this month to establish a scheduling

order. Assuming everything proceeds as expected, we anticipate the matter will likely be fully briefed toward the end of the year.

11. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Ms. Leumer provided an update on the California Legislative session. This Friday is the deadline for policy committees to meet. By then, we should have a much clearer picture of which bills will advance to the Appropriations Committee. The committee is scheduled to hear all bills on the suspense file on May 14. Around that same time, we also expect the Governor's May Revision to be released. Based on updated tax return data, the administration will have a clearer understanding of California's fiscal outlook, and the Governor will revise and reissue the proposed budget accordingly. The May Revision also marks the beginning of budget negotiations with the Legislature, as the state is required to finalize its budget by the end of June.

There are a number of interesting bills moving through the process this year, particularly related to environmental review, beneficial fire practices, and permitting reform. Overall, it is shaping up to be a very active and interesting legislative session.

Ms. Conrad-Saydah said I won't be able to attend the retreat or the board meeting next month and am sorry to miss the opportunity to be with all of you. I did want to share a few of the key items I would normally emphasize during the retreat. First, the importance of continuing to ground our actions and decisions in science and science-based information before moving forward on policy or implementation. I also want to continue emphasizing collaboration across programs so that our work truly reflects the reality that we are living and working within a shared watershed.

Ms. Williamson asked Ms. Conrad-Saydah to share with the group why she'll miss the May meeting.

Ms. Conrad-Saydah said my 12-year-old son, Kai Conrad Johnson, won the regional Bee and he'll be representing Sacramento at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C.

Ms. Laine also congratulated the City of South Lake Tahoe on securing funding for the new $82 million Recreation and Aquatic Center. That is incredibly exciting news for the community.

I also wanted to let the Board know that the Emerald Bay pilot project is scheduled to resume in 2026, operating from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Our team is working diligently to get everything organized and prepared for implementation.

Ms. Holloway said for the Village at Palisades Tahoe Specific Plan in Olympic Valley went before the Placer County Planning Commission on April 16, and the Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors will be meeting in Tahoe on May 12 and is scheduled to reconsider the project at that time. As you may recall, the project was originally approved in 2024, but subsequent lawsuits followed. Since then, the applicant has been working through those issues and has proposed revisions to the project, which the Board will review in a couple of weeks. There's a lot of progress that has been made from the applicant's perspective and in terms of the broader community support reflected during the Planning Commission hearing.

Ms. Hill said the Tahoe Transportation District had a meeting earlier this month and discussed what they are going to do with the old elementary school in Incline Village. The Reno Housing Authority will be submitting a letter to the Federal Transit Administration, along with a letter of support from Washoe County, in coordination with TTD, to pursue the site as a workforce housing project. The

federal approval process will take some time, and we do not yet know exactly what the final structure or approval will look like. This is a great example of what can happen when there is strong political will to keep a property in government hands and work toward a long-term community benefit, even if it takes time to achieve. The Reno Housing Authority will not serve as the master developer. Instead, the project will eventually go through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process for developers interested in pursuing it. It feels like substantial progress has finally been made on this site, and we may actually see workforce housing in the North Shore and Incline Village. It feels like decades in the making.

Mr. Guthreau shared with the group that it is Member Hill's birthday today and wished her a happy birthday.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Local Government Committee

No report.

B. Legal Committee

No report.

C. Operations & Governance Committee

No report.

D. Environmental Improvement Program Committee

No report.

E. Transportation Committee

No report.

F. Regional Planning Committee

No report.

G. Tahoe Living Working Group

No report.

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13. PUBLIC INTEREST COMMENTS

None.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hill made a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Williamson adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marja Ambler
Clerk to the Board

The above meeting was recorded in its entirety. Anyone wishing to listen to the recording of the above-mentioned meeting may find it at https://www.trpa.gov/meeting-materials/. In addition, written documents submitted at the meeting are available for review. If you require assistance locating this information, please contact the TRPA at (775) 588-4547 or virtualmeetinghelp@trpa.gov.

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