



4-1 decision is made
after intense debate

By Bill Dentzer
Review-Journal Capital Bureau

RENO — Lawmakers in Nevada's second-largest county Tuesday rejected a multi-pronged, legally questionable rewrite of county election procedures advanced by election-fraud conspiracists, closing out a monthlong debate over the controversial measure.

The Washoe County Commission's 4-1 vote came shortly before 6 p.m. following six hours of public testimony that drew hundreds of residents and scores of speakers.

"In my eight years of tenure, I have never sat through this much public comment with this much passion on one issue," Commissioner Bob Lucey said just prior to the vote, adding that the intense public interest "only pushes me further into the idea that this needs to be vetted fully and adequately."

Failing that, he said, "I'm a no in its current form."

On display throughout the day's testimony were two diametrically opposed views of American democracy and voting rights, one favoring an expanded ballot aimed at making voting easier for more people, the other seeking tighter restrictions on

See **WASHOE 2B**

Town hall focuses on legalization of short-term rentals

By Shea Johnson
Las Vegas Review-Journal

With the legalization of short-term rentals in Clark County a forthcoming certainty, the conversation has shifted to best-practice regulations.

"We're trying to get the policy right," Commissioner Ross Miller said Tuesday evening.

Miller hosted the first of two town halls this

week inviting the public to weigh in on how county lawmakers should set rules for the home-sharing venture, made popular on platforms such as Airbnb and VRBO, before a state-mandated deadline of July 1.

If the public meeting inside commission chambers was any indication, "right" is a subjective goal.

Some suggested that lawmakers lift a distance

requirement intended to prevent a proliferation of short-term rentals. Others requested that Mount Charleston be carved out of regulations, worried about the potential for fires and how far removed the northwestern mountain community is from police.

Ed Uehling, a regular commenter and frequent government critic at commission meetings, charged that state law that passed

last year and mandates the county to regulate short-term rentals was intended to benefit resort hotels, pointing to the 2,500-foot distance separation required between a rental and a hotel.

"It's a total lie to say it's for the protection of the community," he said.

But the law came as a response to the failure

See **RENTALS 2B**

Investors in probed \$300M Ponzi scheme sue LV attorney

By Katelyn Newberg
Las Vegas Review-Journal

Investors in an alleged \$300 million Ponzi scheme filed a class-action lawsuit Monday against a Las Vegas lawyer, who is facing separate federal criminal charges, accused of orchestrating the operation.

The investors who filed the lawsuit in District Court include Elizabeth Lewis, who runs a Henderson cabinet company; Paul Maalouf, a retired law enforcement officer; Brad Maloff, who owns a local tax service, the lawsuit said.

The plaintiffs claim they were investing into the com-

pany J&J Consulting, and were told the investments provided money to people who had settled legal claims in personal injury cases and were seeking short-term funding before the settlements were paid.

"In short, the J&J Conspirators marketed and sold interests in purported personal injury settlements

while promising 10 (percent) to 20 (percent) returns paid every couple of months,” the lawsuit said. “Instead of investing the funds as represented, the J&J Conspirators used the money in a classic Ponzi-like fashion, while drawing significant profits.”

The lawsuit accuses Las Vegas attorney Matthew Bea-

sley of controlling the funds through his Wells Fargo account, and soliciting investors with Jeffrey Judd, the president of J&J Consulting.

Earlier this month, Beasley was shot by FBI agents who went to his house to question him about the Ponzi scheme.

See **BEASLEY 2B**

Use your mobile phone camera and this QR code to access today's eEdition, with more local and regional stories.



BEST LAS VEGAS BEST Air Duct Cleaning
BEST LAS VEGAS BEST Maintenance Professional/ Handyman
BEST LAS VEGAS BEST Air Conditioning/ HVAC Service

KEEP THE AIR CLEAN AND THE FAMILY COOL



AIR SUPPLY

AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING

702-659-8960

0% Financing Available!







Lic#0073474 MHD - Lic#A0152

ALLERGIES? SNEEZING? WATERY EYES?

It's Time To Clean Your Ducts!

AIR DUCT CLEANING

\$6⁹⁹

PER VENT No Limit

FREE Register Cleaning and Free Deodorizing

Expires March 31, 2022

If It Is In your ducts It is in your lungs!

WITH AIR DUCT CLEANING YOU GET... FREE DRYER VENT CLEANING

SPRING TUNE-UP SPECIAL

FOR YOUR A/C SYSTEM ONLY

- ✓ CHECK FREON
- ✓ CHECK MOTORS
- ✓ CHECK CAPACITORS
- ✓ CHECK LEAKS
- ✓ CHECK THERMOSTATS
- ✓ CHECK WIRING & COMPRESSOR
- ✓ CHECK INDOOR/OUTDOOR COILS

\$39

(Reg. \$79)
Expires March 31, 2022

FREE

OUTDOOR COIL CLEANING WITH A/C TUNE-UP

CANNOT COMBINE WITH OTHER OFFERS.



Benjamin Hager Las Vegas Review-Journal @benjaminhphoto
Julie Davies, an educator of a local short-term rental course, speaks during a town hall regarding the regulation of short-term rentals Tuesday.

RENTALS

Continued from Page 1B

of the county’s outright ban on the short-term rental market. There are between 6,000 and 12,000 estimated homes currently operating even though they are not allowed, officials say.

The law also was borne by the notion that regulations could both safeguard neighborhoods and provide a pathway to legalization for homeowners, according to Assemblywoman Rochelle Nguyen.

Nguyen, the law’s architect, reiterated that the legislation received bipartisan support as she and Miller listened to several people speak during the roughly 90-minute town hall. As a sign of the “robust” turnout, as Miller had described it, at

least a handful of attendees were unable to get their comments in before the town hall ended.

The county has invited public comment via email at STRComment@ClarkCountyNV.gov.

Some rules are mandated by the state, such as a prohibition on short-term rentals in apartments and a ban on parties and other large events. Elsewhere, the county has local authority, including in determining the number of licenses to allow and the enforcement policy.

Last week, county lawmakers discussed creating a lottery system and limiting the number of licenses to roughly 2,800.

Another town hall, to be hosted by Commissioner Justin Jones, is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Thursday at Desert Breeze Community Center, 8275 Spring Mountain Road.

BEASLEY

Continued from Page 1B

federal prosecutors have said. The 49-year-old now faces a charge of assault on a federal officer.

According to the lawsuit, the Ponzi scheme began in 2017 and spread to include downstream sellers who were “utilized to lure additional investors.”

The investors claimed they lost tens of thousands of dollars, with Lewis losing more than \$480,000, Maalouf losing nearly \$90,000, and Maloff losing more than \$200,000, the lawsuit said.

“J&J Consulting targeted investors who shared the same faith, hobbies and gym memberships,” the lawsuit said.

Although Judd was not named as a defendant in Monday’s lawsuit, a separate suit was filed Wednesday against Beasley, Judd and multiple companies associated with the men.

Mark Murphy, who filed that suit, claimed he had invested about \$700,000 into the company since 2017, and would receive payments on his investments about every three months.

Murphy claimed he was aware of more than \$16 million that was invested into the alleged Ponzi scheme from more than 163 investors, the lawsuit said.

The investors who filed Monday’s suit also named Wells Fargo as a defendant, and claimed the bank should have known that Beasley’s bank account, which belonged to his law firm, was not being used for its

intended purpose.

“Put simply, Wells Fargo knew J&J and Beasley were running a sham investment and misappropriating and/or misapplying investor funds through the Trust Account and related accounts,” the lawsuit said.

Wells Fargo did not immediately respond to request for comment. Beasley’s attorney did not respond to request for comment, and attempts to reach Judd on Monday evening were unsuccessful.

Judd told Murphy that the FBI had raided his home, and “his assets were frozen or taken based on the FBI’s allegations of a Ponzi Scheme,” according to the lawsuit Murphy filed.

“Even in this conversation, Judd represented that it was not a Ponzi scheme, the investments were solid, the business was legal, and if allowed to continue, the profit distributions would continue as well,” the lawsuit said.

On March 3, federal agents arrived at Beasley’s home on the 5400 block of Ruffian Road, near Ann Road. Beasley came to the door holding a gun, and at one point pointed the gun at his own head, prosecutors have said.

When the agents yelled for Beasley to drop the gun, he pointed the firearm at the agents “in a sweeping motion,” according to a criminal complaint. The agents then shot Beasley in the chest and shoulder, after which the attorney refused to leave his home for nearly four hours.

Beasley later “repeatedly confessed” to his involvement in the Ponzi scheme, prosecutors said.

WASHOE

Continued from Page 1B

casting ballots and citing unproven and debunked claims of fraudulent voting.

In the end, however, the measure’s success or failure turned as much on legal questions of what is within the purview of counties in Nevada to regulate regarding election law, authority over which is invested in the Legislature. Lawmakers in 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, enacted a number of voting reforms including universal mail-in voting. Those reforms were made permanent in last year.

Rebutting allegations

In written memos submitted to the commission, lawyers and researchers for the Legislature and county government dissected each of the resolution’s 20 proposals, which included returning primarily to using paper ballots and not electronic machines, hand-counting of ballots, and posting National Guard members or sheriff’s deputies at polling places.

Other changes sought to require all poll workers be county residents; that ballots dropped at collection points be scanned and checked against a voter registration database before being accepted, and that different-colored ballots be issued to same-day registrants to vote.

“There’s a reason for every one of the things that we put on this list,” said Commissioner Jeanne Herman, who sponsored the measure and cast the only vote supporting it.

In a 17-page review of the changes, an assistant district attorney wrote that while some of the proposed actions are within the commission’s power to enact, such as hand-counting ballots and posting sheriff’s deputies, other more restrictive proposals — such as requiring mail ballots to be sent voters via certified mail — were not.

“The proposed election integrity resolution deals with election law. Election law is almost certainly not a matter of local concern,” the attorney, Nathan Edwards wrote.

Sending ballots via certified mail also would cost the county \$3.9 million more in postage, county officials estimated. Overall the total additional cost to the county for postage, additional poll workers and equipment was put at \$5 million.

In my eight years of tenure, I have never sat through this much public comment with this much passion on one issue.

Bob Lucey
Washoe County commissioner

Evenly divided public

Additionally, in a memo to the commission, the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office said it did not have enough personnel to staff the county’s 65 Election Day polling places or 25 early voting sites.

Public comment for and against was fairly even, with longtime poll workers among those speaking out against the measure and describing it as a solution in search of a problem and accusing proponents of trying to suppress the vote.

“You can’t count these votes by hand. You’ll never get it done,” said lawyer Margo Piscevich, who has worked as a poll watcher.

A supporter, Betty Thiessen, said paper ballots have been used in elections since the country’s founding. “What’s the problem now?” she said.

Both the state Democratic party and the ACLU of Nevada had condemned the proposal, with the civil rights group threatening to sue to block it if it passed.

The state party celebrated its defeat Tuesday evening, with party Chair Judith Whitmer issuing a statement calling it “part of a broader strategy that is playing out in Republican-dominated areas around the country, a strategy intended to delegitimize the very foundations of our democracy.”

Meanwhile, in Nye County, commissioners passed a resolution last week that asked — but did not demand — that the county clerk enact similar reforms.

The clerk said no changes are possible before the June 14 primary election.

Contact Capital Bureau reporter Bill Dentzer at bdentzer@reviewjournal.com. Follow @DentzerNews on Twitter.

VALID ONLY

WITH COUPON

LIMITED TIME OFFER

EXPIRES MARCH 25TH, 2022

3.60%

6 MONTH TERM FDIC INSURED

Safe & Secure ★★★★★ 5 Star Rated Banks Available

Sun Cities Financial Group

www.suncitiesfinancialgroup.com

3960 Howard Hughes Pkwy Suite 500
Las Vegas, Nevada 89169
702-530-5938

8430 W. Lake Mead Blvd Suite 100
Las Vegas, Nevada 89128
702-608-0745

AS SEEN ON

CBS NEWS

FOX

NBC

abc

By Appointment Only For Your Safety

Open Monday - Friday: 9am-4pm

Advertised yield consists of a .20% annual percentage yield plus 3.40% interest bonus which equals the above advertised yield. \$15,000 deposit required and certain restrictions may apply. Penalty for early withdrawal. FDIC insured to \$250,000 per institution. New customers only. Rates available for returning customers. Sun Cities is not a bank and checks are not made payable to Sun Cities, only the FDIC insured bank you select. Sun Cities is a leader in locating superior insurance and banking products.

Member
22 Years

Nominations
Now Open!

PRESENTED BY

SUPPORTING SPONSOR

BENEFACTOR SPONSOR

Nominate a student Grades 1-12

Deadline: Apr. 8

reviewjournal.com/academics

One **winner** from each grade level receives **\$500** and **\$500** to their school.