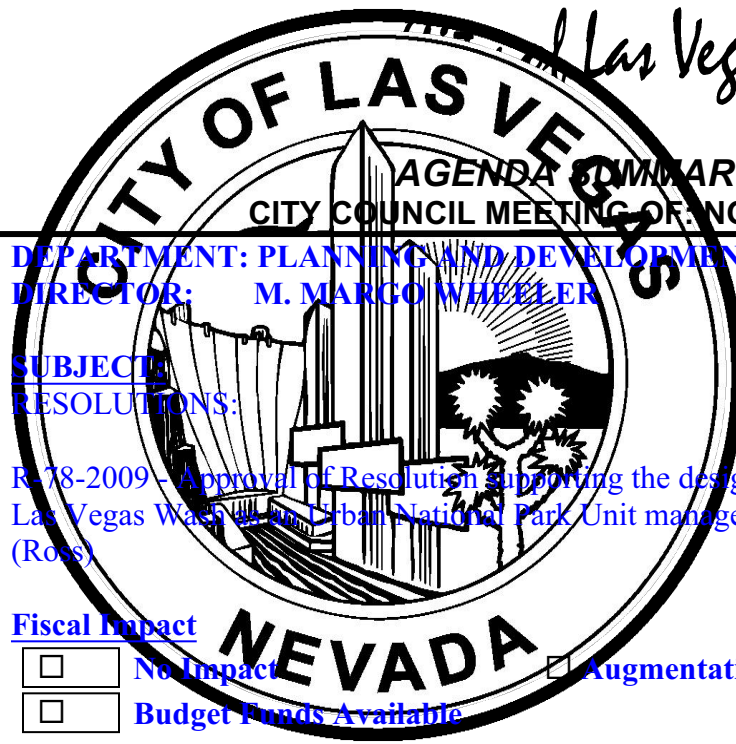




Las Vegas

Agenda Item No.: 46.

AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 2009

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

DIRECTOR: M. MARGO WHEELER

☒ **Consent** ☐ **Discussion**

SUBJECT:
RESOLUTIONS:

R-78-2009 - Approval of Resolution supporting the designation of an area known as The Upper Las Vegas Wash as an Urban National Park Unit managed by The National Park Service Ward 6 (Ross)

Fiscal Impact

☐

No Impact

☐

Augmentation Required

☐

Budget Funds Available

Amount:

Funding Source:

Dept./Division:

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

The Upper Las Vegas Wash area has been confirmed to have significant paleontological fossils demonstrative of the Pleistocene Ice Age. Thousands of Ice Age mammal fossils have been catalogued including Columbian Mammoth, Ground Sloth, American Lion, Camelops, Bison and ancient species of Horse. This resolution supports establishment of an urban national park unit in the Upper Las Vegas wash area and directs staff to participate in planning of the new urban national park unit.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council approve this Resolution and authorize its execution on behalf of the city.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Resolution No. R-78-2009
2. Submitted at meeting Letter of Support by Colonel Howard D. Belote, Department of the Air Force and Tule Springs/Upper Las Vegas Wash Letters of Endorsement and Fact Sheets

Motion made by STEVEN D. ROSS to Approve

Passed For: 7; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

RICKI Y. BARLOW, LOIS TARKANIAN, STEVE WOLFSON, OSCAR B. GOODMAN, GARY REESE, STEVEN D. ROSS, STAVROS S. ANTHONY; (Against-None); (Abstain-None); (Did Not Vote-None); (Excused-None)

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Minutes:

TED OLIVAS, Director of Administrative Services, stated that the area contains ecological resources and is located in Ward 6. Over the last six months he has been working with SENATOR HARRY REIDS Office, with the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, the National Park Conservation Association, North Las Vegas and Clark County. The other jurisdictions have a similar resolution on their agenda. The Resolution supports the establishment of a National Park unit in the upper Las Vegas Wash and directs staff to participate in the planning of the park.

COUNCILMAN ROSS pointed out that this is a golden opportunity to recognize a great treasure and he is grateful for everyone's support of this resolution.

SANDY CROTO, Board Member of the Protector's at Tule Springs and the Ice Age Park Foundation, was honored to represent a coalition of local and national groups to urge for the Council's support. She asked those in support to stand, and submitted a letter signed by various organizations supporting the Resolution.

MS. CROTO stated that three years ago, her group learned about the existence of an ice age fossil treasure and endangered plants in the northern end of the Las Vegas Valley. They were determined to inform everyone about this non-renewable source beneath their homes. Their goal was to educate the public and advocate for the protection of these resources for generations to come. The approval of the Resolution will enhance the Las Vegas Valley reputation as an international designation. Due to the documented global significance of the geologic and ice age fossil record, scientists are expected to make reservations to study here. The new University of Las Vegas (UNLV) campus will be located on the east side of the park and will give students the opportunity to study paleontology, archeology and geology in a real environment. The group will remain protectors of this land, and she thanked the City Council for realizing the economic and scientific potential that this National Park Unit will have. They look forward to partnering with the County and the City as they move forward to doing what is necessary to protect this Las Vegas wash.

DEBORAH McNEIL, Director of Public Partnerships at Nellis Air Force Base, appeared with CAPTAIN RYAN PRICE and asked the City Council to support the Resolution because Nellis Air Force Base sees this as an opportunity to protect two national treasures; the Wash and the Nellis Complex. Creech Air Force Base and the Nevada Test and Training Range bring about \$5.1 billion annually to the community, and they anticipate that will continue to grow. As they continue to grow, their concern is how they can continue to operate and protect the range while keeping the community safe. They will continue their low level departures and preserve what is on the ground by being a partner of conservation. They are glad that the City supports the concept, and they want to ensure the Air Force can continue to fly over the area as well.

HELEN MORTENSEN, President of the Las Vegas Ice Age Park Foundation, thanked the City Council for listening to them and pointed out this starts an era of a new type of tourist coming to

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Las Vegas. It will improve the schools and society. The National Park will pay for the advertising, and this is an important aspect to add to the tourism industry, to the State and the universities.

COUNCILMAN ROSS pointed out that this is not automatic but a long and arduous process, and the City of Las Vegas is working collectively with Clark County and North Las Vegas on this process.

RITA RAMSON, Sierra Club, stated they support the designation of this area as a national park. Not only does it represent a complex hydrological system but it is full of rare plants. She emphasized the richness of the fossil deposits in that area, and the need to keep the area protected. The best way it can be done is by having the National Park Service maintain it. The economic impact on having a national monument in Las Vegas is incredible. She acknowledged that, for the tribal partners, this area has a tremendous cultural significance.

MAYOR GOODMAN stated he will be looking for the support of all interested parties to ensure that the future and continued growth Las Vegas is protected.

See Item 13 for related discussion.

