



STATE OF NEVADA

BEFORE THE NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS

In re **Devon Reese**,
City Councilmember,
City of Reno,
State of Nevada,

Ethics Complaint
Case No. 22-104C

Subject. /

STIPULATED AGREEMENT

1. **PURPOSE:** This stipulation ("Stipulation") is entered into in Ethics Complaint Case No. 22-104C regarding Devon Reese ("Reese") to reinstate the previously vacated Deferral Agreement, find that Reese has fully complied with the Deferral Agreement, and dismiss the case consistent with the terms and conditions of the deferral agreement.

2. **JURISDICTION:** At all material times, Reese served as a City Councilmember for the City of Reno ("City") and was a public officer as defined in NRS 281A.160. The Ethics in Government Law ("Ethics Law") set forth in NRS Chapter 281A gives the Commission jurisdiction over Reese as a public officer whose conduct was alleged to have violated the provisions of NRS Chapter 281A. See NRS 281A.280.

3. **PROCEDURAL HISTORY:**

a. On or about September 12, 2022, the Commission received Ethics Complaint No. 22-104C from a member of the public ("Requester") alleging violations of NRS 281A.400(2), (3), and (9) and NRS 281A.420(3).

b. On October 27, 2022, the Commission issued its Order on Jurisdiction and Investigation regarding the alleged violations of NRS 281A.400(2), (3), (9) and NRS 281A.420(3) and directed the Executive Director to serve a Notice of Complaint, Additional Issues and Facts, and Investigation regarding additional alleged violations of NRS 281A.420(1).

c. On October 27, 2022, staff of the Commission issued a Notice of Complaint and Investigation and a separate Notice of Additional Issues and Facts, to Reese

pursuant to NRS 281A.720 and NAC 281A.410 and provided Reese with an opportunity to submit a response to the allegations.

d. On January 5, 2023, Reese, by and through his counsel Assistant City Attorney Jonathan D. Shipman, provided a written response to the allegations.

e. On March 15, 2023, the Executive Director presented a recommendation relating to just and sufficient cause to a review panel pursuant to NRS 281A.725.

f. On March 15, 2024, a Review Panel Determination was issued concluding that there was not just and sufficient cause to proceed on the alleged violations of NRS 281A.400(2), (3), and (9) but found that the facts did establish credible evidence to support a determination that just and sufficient cause existed for the Commission to render an opinion as to the alleged violations of NRS 281A.420(1) and (3). The same Review Panel reasonably believed that Reese's conduct could be addressed through corrective action under the terms and conditions of a deferral agreement.

g. On April 27, 2023 Reese agreed to the deferral agreement's terms of conditions requiring 1) continued compliance with the Ethics Law without a subsequent Review Panel finding just and sufficient cause existed to refer a matter to the Commission on a complaint for conduct after the deferral agreement was agreed to, 2) Ethics Law training within 60 days, 3) development of a conflict checking system with his employer, and 4) submission of City Council meeting minutes showing proper disclosures (the "Deferral Agreement"). See Exhibit A.

h. On September 17, 2024, a review panel found and concluded that facts established credible evidence to support a determination that just and sufficient cause existed for the Commission to render an opinion in the unrelated ethics complaints in Case Nos. 24-036C and 24-050C regarding Reese.

i. Prior to the review panel's action on September 17, 2024, Reese had fully complied in all material respects with the training, conflict checking, and disclosure reporting requirements of the Deferral Agreement.

j. On January 16, 2025, the Commission vacated the Deferral Agreement in Case No 22-104C, based entirely on the Commission's receipt of the unrelated ethics complaints in Case Nos. 24-036C and 24-050C.

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4. STIPULATED FACTS:

a. During the discovery process in Case Nos. 24-036C and 24-050C, the Executive Director determined that the preponderance of evidence indicated no violations occurred, and the parties subsequently entered into a stipulated dismissal agreement in the unrelated ethics complaints Case Nos. 24-036C and 24-050C.

b. Reese complied with all terms and conditions established in the Deferral Agreement.

5. TERMS / CONCLUSIONS OF LAW: Based on the foregoing, Reese and the Commission agree as follows:

a. In light of the final disposition of Case Nos. 24-036C and 24-050C, the Deferral Agreement in this matter is reinstated effective January 16, 2025.

b. Reese has successfully completed the terms and conditions of the deferral agreement and therefore the matter is dismissed with prejudice with no finding of a violation of the Ethics Law.

c. This Agreement is based on the specific facts, circumstances, and law now before the Commission. Facts or circumstances that differ from those present in this matter may create a different resolution.

d. This Agreement is not intended to be applicable to or create any admission of liability by Reese for any other proceedings against or involving them, and such use is prohibited to the extent permitted by the jurisdiction of the Commission. If the Commission rejects this Agreement, none of the provisions herein shall be considered by the Commission or be admissible as evidence in a hearing in this matter.

6. WAIVER

a. The Parties knowingly and voluntarily waive any, and all rights they may be accorded in regard to this matter pursuant to NRS Chapter 281A, the regulations of the Commission (NAC Chapter 281A), the Nevada Administrative Procedures Act (NRS Chapter 233B), and any other applicable provisions of law.

b. Reese knowingly and voluntarily waives his rights to any judicial review of this Agreement as provided in NRS Chapter 281A, NRS Chapter 233B, or any other applicable provisions of law.

7. **ACCEPTANCE:** We, the undersigned parties, have read this Agreement, understand each and every provision therein, and agree to be bound thereby once approved by the Commission. In addition, the parties orally agreed to be bound by the terms of this Agreement during the regular meeting of the Commission on _____, 2025.¹

DATED this 27th day of August, 2025.



Devon Reese, Esq.

DATED this 27th day of August, 2025.

FOR DEVON REESE, ESQ.
/s/ Jonathan D. Shipman

Jonathan Shipman, Esq.
Reno City Attorney's Office

DATED this 27th day of August, 2025.



Ross E. Armstrong, Esq.
Executive Director
Nevada Commission on Ethics

Approved as to form by:

FOR NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Greg D. Ott, Esq.
Chief Deputy Attorney General

¹ Subject waived any right to receive written notice pursuant to NRS 241.033 of the time and place of the Commission's meeting to consider his character, alleged misconduct, professional competence, or physical or mental health.

7. **ACCEPTANCE:** We, the undersigned parties, have read this Agreement, understand each and every provision therein, and agree to be bound thereby once approved by the Commission. In addition, the parties orally agreed to be bound by the terms of this Agreement during the regular meeting of the Commission on September 23, 2025.¹

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2025.

Devon Reese, Esq.

FOR COUNTY DEVON REESE, ESQ.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2025.

Jonathan Shipman, Esq.
Reno City Attorney's Office

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2025.

Ross E. Armstrong, Esq.
Executive Director
Nevada Commission on Ethics

Approved as to form by:

FOR NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS

DATED this 23rd day of September, 2025.

/s/ Mary Olson

Mary Olson, Esq.
Deputy Attorney General

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¹ Subject waived any right to receive written notice pursuant to NRS 241.033 of the time and place of the Commission's meeting to consider his character, alleged misconduct, professional competence, or physical or mental health.

The Stipulated Agreement in Case No. 24-104C regarding Devon Reese is accepted by the Nevada Commission on Ethics:

DATED this 23rd day of September, 2025.

By: /s/ Scott Scherer
Scott Scherer, Esq.
Chair

By: /s/ John T. Moran
John T. Moran, III
Commissioner

By: /s/ Kim Wallin
Kim Wallin, CPA, CMA, CFM
Vice Chair

By: /s/ Terry J. Reynolds
Terry J. Reynolds
Commissioner

By: Abstained²
Michael Langton, Esq.
Commissioner

By: /s/ Brianna Smith
Brianna Smith, Esq.
Commissioner

By: /s/ John Miller
John Miller
Commissioner

² Commissioner Langton abstained from participation and voting in this matter based on Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 2.11. In his role on the Commission, Commissioner Langton serves in a quasi-judicial role. Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 2.11 requires a judge or quasi-judicial officer to disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned based on, but not limited to, various circumstances listed in Canon 2.11, including personal knowledge of or experience with the parties or the facts involved in the matter. Having reviewed the circumstances listed in Canon 2.11, Commissioner Langton determined it was appropriate to abstain from this matter to avoid the appearance of bias or impropriety in the proceedings.

Exhibit A



STATE OF NEVADA

BEFORE THE NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS

In re **Devon Reese**, Member, City Council,
City of Reno, State of Nevada,

Ethics Complaint
Case No. 22-104C

Subject. /

**DEFERRAL AGREEMENT
NRS 281A.740**

1. On March 15, 2023, a Review Panel authorized the Executive Director of the Nevada Commission on Ethics ("Commission") and Devon Reese ("Reese") to develop this Deferral Agreement (the "Agreement") to address the alleged conduct at issue in Ethics Complaint No. 22-104C ("Complaint") instead of referring the Complaint to the Commission for further proceedings.

2. At all material times, Reese served as the at-large member of the Reno City Council and was a public officer as defined in NRS 281A.160. The Ethics in Government Law ("Ethics Law") set forth in NRS Chapter 281A gives the Commission jurisdiction over Reese as a public officer whose conduct is alleged to have violated the provisions of NRS Chapter 281A. See NRS 281A.280.

3. This Agreement is entered into based upon the March 15, 2023 Review Panel Determination that Reese's alleged conduct may be appropriately addressed through the terms and conditions of a deferral agreement instead of referring the Complaint to the Commission for further proceedings.

4. The Review Panel Determination was based on facts established by sufficient evidence to support just and sufficient cause for the Commission to render an opinion in the matter. The facts relied upon by the Review Panel to make its determination are summarized in Appendix A ("Relevant Facts Relied Upon by the Review Panel").¹

¹ The Relevant Facts Relied Upon by the Review Panel do not constitute part of the "Investigative File" as that term is defined by NRS 281A.755. All statutory and common law protections afforded to the Investigative File shall remain and are not affected by this Agreement.

5. No findings have been made by the Review Panel or the Commission that Reese violated the Ethics Law, and this Agreement does not constitute an admission by Reese of any violation of the Ethics Law.

A. Procedural History:

1. On or about September 12, 2022, the Commission received Ethics Complaint No. 22-104C from a member of the public ("Requester").

2. On October 27, 2022, the Commission issued an *Order on Jurisdiction and Investigation* directing the Executive Director to conduct an investigation regarding Reese's alleged violations of the following provisions of the Ethics Law:

NRS 281A.400(2) Using his position in government to secure or grant unwarranted privileges, preferences, exemptions or advantages for himself, any business entity in which he has a significant pecuniary interest, or any person to whom he has a commitment in a private capacity.

NRS 281A.400(3) Participating as an agent of government in the negotiation or execution of a contract between the government and himself, any business entity in which he has a significant pecuniary interest or any person to whom he has a commitment in a private capacity.

NRS 281A.400(9) Attempting to benefit a personal or pecuniary interest of any person to whom he has a commitment in a private capacity through the influence of a subordinate.

NRS 281A.420(3) Failing to abstain from acting on an official matter which is materially affected by his acceptance of a gift or loan, pecuniary interest, or commitment in a private capacity to the interest of another person.

3. In the *Order on Jurisdiction and Investigation*, the Commission granted Requester confidentiality pursuant to NRS 281A.750.

4. Pursuant to NAC 281A.415, the Commission directed the Executive Director to serve a *Notice of Additional Issues and Facts* regarding the following violations in addition to the allegations set forth in the Ethics Complaint:

NRS 281A.420(1) Failing to sufficiently disclose his acceptance of a gift or loan, pecuniary interest, commitment in a private capacity to the interest of another person or the nature of any representation or counseling provided to a private person for compensation before another agency in the preceding year that is reasonably affected by an official matter.

5. On October 27, 2022, the Executive Director provided a *Notice of Complaint and Investigation* and a separate *Notice of Additional Issues and Facts* to Subject pursuant to NRS 281A.720 and NAC 281A.410 and provided Reese with an opportunity to submit a response to the allegations.

6. On January 5, 2023, Reese, by and through his counsel Assistant City Attorney Jonathan D. Shipman, provided a written response to the allegations.

7. Reese fully cooperated with investigators; was candid and professional; waived time to provide staff and legal counsel time to marshal and analyze material facts; and, minimized costs to the Commission.

8. On March 15, 2023, the Executive Director presented a recommendation relating to just and sufficient cause to a three-member review panel pursuant to NRS 281A.725.

9. A Review Panel Determination issued on March 15, 2023 concluded that:

The Review Panel unanimously finds and concludes that the facts do not establish credible evidence to support a determination that just and sufficient cause exists for the Commission to render an opinion in the matter regarding the alleged violations of NRS 281A.400(2), (3) and (9). However, the Review Panel unanimously finds and concludes that the facts do establish credible evidence to support a determination that just and sufficient cause exists for the Commission to render an opinion in the matter regarding the alleged violations of NRS 281A.420(1) and (3). Nevertheless, pursuant to NRS 281A.730, the Review Panel reasonably believes that Reese's conduct may be appropriately addressed through corrective action under the terms and conditions of a deferral agreement instead of referring these allegations to the Commission for further proceedings at this time.

B. Terms and Conditions of Deferral Agreement:

1. This Agreement shall be in effect for a period of two (2) years (the "Deferral Period") from the date of approval by the Review Panel.

2. Reese must comply in all material respects with the provisions of the Ethics Law set forth in NRS Chapter 281A during the Deferral Period without being the subject of another ethics complaint arising from an alleged violation of the Ethics Law which occurs during the Deferral Period and for which a Review Panel determines that there is

just and sufficient cause for the Commission to determine that Reese violated any Ethics Law.

3. All elected officials receive periodic ethics trainings. Reese shall receive specific ethics training related to conflicts of interest approved by the Executive Director within 60 days from the date of the Review Panel's approval of this Agreement.

4. Reese must develop a NRS 281A.420 conflict checking system approved by the Executive Director that identifies City matters that may impact the private interests of Hutchison & Steffen clients, requiring Reese to disclose and/or abstain from approving, disapproving, voting, or otherwise acting upon the matter.

5. Reese shall submit minutes from all Reno City Council Meetings involving matters or clients represented by Hutchison & Steffen to the Executive Director for the first year of the term of the deferral agreement.

6. During the Deferral Period, the Executive Director shall monitor Reese's compliance with this Agreement. Should the Executive Director discover that Reese has not complied with any term or condition of this Agreement, the Executive Director shall:

- a. Inform the Commission of any alleged failure of Reese to comply with this Agreement;
- b. Give Reese written notice of any alleged failure to comply with this Agreement; and
- c. Allow Reese not less than 15 days to respond to such a notice.

7. The Commission may vacate this Agreement and conduct further proceedings in the matter, including an adjudicatory hearing, if the Commission finds that Reese failed to comply with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

8. If Reese complies with the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Commission shall dismiss this complaint with prejudice.

9. This Agreement applies only to the alleged conduct related to this Complaint, and is not intended to apply to any future unrelated alleged conduct.

C. Acceptance: We, the undersigned parties, have read this Agreement, understand each and every provision therein, and agree to be bound thereby.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Devon Reese

FOR DEVON REESE

Jonathan D. Shipman
Assistant City Attorney
City of Reno

The above Deferral Agreement is approved:

FOR ROSS E. ARMSTRONG, ESQ.
Executive Director
Nevada Commission on Ethics

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2023.

/s/ _____
Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq.
Associate Counsel
Nevada Commission on Ethics

Approved as to form by:

FOR REVIEW PANEL OF THE
NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS

DATED this 13th day of April, 2023.

/s/ Laena St-Jules _____
Laena St-Jules, Esq.
Deputy Attorney General

The above Deferral Agreement is approved by the Review Panel.

Dated: April 13, 2023

By: /s/ Teresa Lowry _____
Teresa Lowry
Commissioner/Presiding Officer

By: ABSTAINED _____
Amanda Yen, Esq.²
Commissioner

By: /s/ Brian Duffrin _____
Brian Duffrin
Commissioner

² After consultation with Commission Counsel, Commissioner Amanda Yen disclosed that the City of Reno is a client of McDonald Carano ("Firm"). Commissioner Yen is a partner with the Firm and has both a pecuniary interest in her employment and a private commitment to the Firm, as her employer, and its clients under NRS 281A.065. Consequently, the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in Commissioner Yen's situation could be materially affected in voting upon matters related to this case. In order to avoid any appearance of impropriety and to comply with Nevada's Ethics in Government Law set forth in NRS Chapter 281A and Rule 2.11 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, Commissioner Yen disclosed her private interests and abstained from participation in this case.

DATED this 27th day of April, 2023.

Devon Reese
Devon Reese

FOR DEVON REESE

Jonathan D. Shipman
Jonathan D. Shipman
Assistant City Attorney
City of Reno

The above Deferral Agreement is approved:

FOR ROSS E. ARMSTRONG, ESQ.
Executive Director
Nevada Commission on Ethics

DATED this 2nd day of May, 2023.

Elizabeth J. Bassett
Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq.
Associate Counsel
Nevada Commission on Ethics

Approved as to form by:

FOR REVIEW PANEL OF THE
NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Laena St-Jules, Esq.
Laena St-Jules, Esq.
Deputy Attorney General

The above Deferral Agreement is approved by the Review Panel.

Dated: _____

By: /s/ Teresa Lowry
Teresa Lowry
Commissioner/Presiding Officer

By: ABSTAINED
Amanda Yen, Esq.²
Commissioner

By: /s/ Brian Duffrin
Brian Duffrin
Commissioner

² After consultation with Commission Counsel, Commissioner Amanda Yen disclosed that the City of Reno is a client of McDonald Carano ("Firm"). Commissioner Yen is a partner with the Firm and has both a pecuniary interest in her employment and a private commitment to the Firm, as her employer, and its clients under NRS 281A.065. Consequently, the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in Commissioner Yen's situation could be materially affected in voting upon matters related to this case. In order to avoid any appearance of impropriety and to comply with Nevada's Ethics in Government Law set forth in NRS Chapter 281A and Rule 2.11 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, Commissioner Yen disclosed her private interests and abstained from participation in this case.

Appendix A – Relevant Facts Relied Upon by the Review Panel

- A. Reese serves as the At-Large Reno City Councilmember, and he was appointed to serve in this position on February 15, 2018.
- B. In his private capacity, Reese is an attorney and partner employed by the law firm of Hutchison & Steffen.
- C. In response to a prior complaint, the Commission previously served Reese a Confidential Letter of Instruction (“Letter”) to provide guidance about his ethical duty to properly separate his private interests and public duties.

Closed Door Labor Meetings on Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiations

- D. Materials shared with the members of the Council in a closed session called “Labor Negotiations Update #2”, included information about the Reno Police Protective Association (RPPA), both Supervisory and Non-Supervisory groups, and the Reno Professional Administrative Group (“RPAG”) (Supervisory) (collectively “Groups), all of which are represented by Reese’s law firm, Hutchison & Steffen.
- E. Alex Velto served as the lead negotiator on behalf of two Groups represented by Hutchison & Steffen.
- F. Early on, prior to receiving the Letter, Reese disclosed to his City Council colleagues, the City Attorney’s Office, the City Manager, and the City’s collective bargaining representatives that he and his law firm erected and maintained an ethical screen to avoid any conflict of interest.
- G. Thereafter, Reese participated in closed door Council deliberations regarding the negotiations which included the interests of the Groups represented by Hutchison & Steffen. City staff confirmed that Reese participated in these meetings and was one of the more active Councilmembers who provided parameters and directions on future negotiations with all unions.
- H. Interviews with witnesses established that from the City’s perspective, it was critical to treat all bargaining groups consistently and equitably across the board.
- I. With so many groups in negotiation in 2022, any participation by Reese in closed door labor update meetings on open contracts did not unduly influence or benefit the interests of the Groups represented by Hutchison & Steffen.

Reno Council Meeting of June 8, 2022

- J. The agenda for the June 8, 2022, Reno City Council meeting presented various collective bargaining agreements to the City Council for approval.
- K. As the collective bargaining agreement item was called, Reese interrupted the Mayor to make a disclosure. He stated:

“I have a disclosure first. Thank you. And I haven’t asked the City Attorney and I think I’ve been advised that I do not have a conflict, but I will represent that one of the attorneys in my office does

represent a number of collective bargaining units within the city. I'm actually not sure which ones they are because I'm walled off from that, but I will disclose that one of the Attorneys in my office, Alexander Velto is an attorney for various although I'm not sure which, groups within the city and although I receive no benefit to it and certainly have not been a part of those discussions, I disclose it for the record."

Video of June 8, 2022 Reno City Council & Redevelopment Agency Board Meeting, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nArl1vpK0fQ> at 2:14:45.

- L. Council members deliberated and approved the collective bargaining agreements as one item. Reese voted in favor of approving all the agreements, including those of the Groups represented by Velto and Hutchison & Steffen.
- M. On September 12, 2022, the Commission received the Complaint in the current matter, Complaint No. 22-104C (Reese), alleging conduct associated with Reno City Council meetings held on March 9, 2022, similar to those at issue in the prior complaint, and another meeting held on June 8, 2022, relating to Reese's participation on and approval of collective bargaining agreements negotiated between the City and the Groups represented by Hutchison & Steffen.