

100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Frances Molarious PO Box 1162 Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Molarious:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

<u>Facts</u>

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Frances Molarious Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

NRS 241.020(2)(c)(1) requires that a public body's agenda provide a "clear and complete statement of the topics scheduled to be considered during the meeting." Nevada's OML seeks to give the public clear notice of the topics to be discussed at public meetings so that the public can attend a meeting when the topic to be discussed is of interest to them. Participation by the public in public meetings is limited to periods of general public comment. NRS 24.020(2)(c)(3). Decisions are made only by the members of the public body.

Clearly the agenda gave the public notice of the topic to be considered by the BOC. Many of the 38 complainants attended the BOC meeting on November 21, 2013, and some made plain their opposition to approval of a bonus of 2.5% and also to a \$350 bonus.

In 2002 this office investigated an OML complaint regarding employee pay raises which alleged a public body took action on a matter not on the agenda. This matter involved a pay raise for two county employees. The public body voted to make the pay raises retroactive. We analyzed whether the public body's vote exceeded the scope of the agenda item. We said:

The complaint alleges that the Board's agenda did not properly notice the public of the action that might be taken with regard to this item, because the Board voted to make the pay increase retroactive. The complaint alleges the retroactivity of the pay increase exceeded the scope of the description of this agenda item.

Frances Molarious Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic," which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman

Bob Hastings, Commissioner
Ray Fierro, Commissioner
Virgil Arellano, Commissioner
Vida Keller, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner



STATE OF NEVADA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Gary R. Nelson 705 Day Lane Wellington, Nevada 89444

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Nelson:

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This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

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Gary R. Nelson Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

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Gary R. Nelson Page 3 January 24, 2014

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CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attornev General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
Bob Hastings, Commissioner
Ray Fierro, Commissioner
Virgil Arellano, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner All other Complainants



STATE OF NEVADA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Lyle Hosford 1 Jackson Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Hosford:

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Lyle Hosford Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Lyle Hosford Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR
Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
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Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Evelyn Thompson 22 Manha Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Thompson:

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Evelyn Thompson Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

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Evelyn Thompson Page 3 January 24, 2014

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR / Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
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Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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Vida Keller, Commissioner



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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Barbara Hosford 1 Jackson Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

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Barbara Hosford Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE/H. TAYLOR // Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel 31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada

27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Joe Mortensen, Chairman

Bob Hastings, Commissioner

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Virgil Arellano, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Nancy Lee Boone 1040 E. 5th Street Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Boone:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

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Nancy Lee Boone Page 2 January 24, 2014

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CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

Bv:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
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Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Colleen P. Cann 1628 Burger Road Fernley, Nevada 89408

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Cann:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

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Colleen P. Cann Page 2 January 24, 2014

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CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

GEORGE H. TAYLOR 6

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel 31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447 Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada 27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447 Joe Mortensen, Chairman Bob Hastings, Commissioner Ray Fierro, Commissioner Virgil Arellano, Commissioner Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail Linda Nagy PO Box 287

Smith, Nevada 89430

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Nagy:

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Linda Nagy Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic," which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GÉORGE HY. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel

31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada

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Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Jim Dunlap 130 N. Bybee Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Dunlap:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Jim Dunlap Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel 31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Mark Thompson 20 Manha Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

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Mark Thompson Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Mark Thompson Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Open Meeting Law

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STATE OF NEVADA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Clifford Thompson 22 Manha Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Gary A. Scrimpsher PO Box 197 Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Scrimpsher:

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Gary A. Scrimpsher Page 2 January 24, 2014

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By:

GEORGE/H. TAYLOR

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Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel 31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

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Joe Mortensen, Chairman

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Virgil Arellano, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner All other Complainants



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail
Lawrence W. Ratcliffe
1628 Burger Road
Fernley, Nevada 89408

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Ratcliffe:

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Lawrence W. Ratcliffe Page 3 January 24, 2014

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CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Vicki Dunlap 130 N. Bybee Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

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Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

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Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada

27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Joe Mortensen, Chairman Bob Hastings, Commissioner Ray Fierro, Commissioner Virgil Arellano, Commissioner Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

John Roemer 703 Day Lane Wellington, Nevada 89444

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Roemer:

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John Roemer Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic." which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely.

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel

31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada

27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Joe Mortensen, Chairman

Bob Hastings, Commissioner

Ray Fierro, Commissioner

Virgil Arellano, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

John Thompson 22 Manha Lane Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Thompson:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

John Thompson Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

NRS 241.020(2)(c)(1) requires that a public body's agenda provide a "clear and complete statement of the topics scheduled to be considered during the meeting." Nevada's OML seeks to give the public clear notice of the topics to be discussed at public meetings so that the public can attend a meeting when the topic to be discussed is of interest to them. Participation by the public in public meetings is limited to periods of general public comment. NRS 24.020(2)(c)(3). Decisions are made only by the members of the public body.

Clearly the agenda gave the public notice of the topic to be considered by the BOC. Many of the 38 complainants attended the BOC meeting on November 21, 2013, and some made plain their opposition to approval of a bonus of 2.5% and also to a \$350 bonus.

In 2002 this office investigated an OML complaint regarding employee pay raises which alleged a public body took action on a matter not on the agenda. This matter involved a pay raise for two county employees. The public body voted to make the pay raises retroactive. We analyzed whether the public body's vote exceeded the scope of the agenda item. We said:

The complaint alleges that the Board's agenda did not properly notice the public of the action that might be taken with regard to this item, because the Board voted to make the pay increase retroactive. The complaint alleges the retroactivity of the pay increase exceeded the scope of the description of this agenda item.

John Thompson Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Sherry L. Talbott PO Box 1 Smith, Nevada 89430

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Talbott:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Sherry L. Talbott Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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Sherry L. Talbott Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

E.R. McClure 1200 E. Green Street Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. McClure:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

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18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

E.R. McClure Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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In 2002 this office investigated an OML complaint regarding employee pay raises which alleged a public body took action on a matter not on the agenda. This matter involved a pay raise for two county employees. The public body voted to make the pay raises retroactive. We analyzed whether the public body's vote exceeded the scope of the agenda item. We said:

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E.R. McClure Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORG# H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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Ray Fierro, Commissioner
Virgil Arellano, Commissioner
Vida Keller, Commissioner



STATE OF NEVADA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

John Forster 3500 Farm District Road Fernley, Nevada 89408

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Forster:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

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John Forster Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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John Forster Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE/H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
Bob Hastings, Commissioner
Ray Fierro, Commissioner

Virgil Arellano, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

John T. Fullenwider 2595 E. 5th Street Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Fullenwider:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

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The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

John T. Fullenwider Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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John T. Fullenwider Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney Gemeral

By:

SEORGE H. TAYLOR Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
Bob Hastings, Commissioner
Ray Fierro, Commissioner
Virgil Arellano, Commissioner
Vida Keller, Commissioner
All other Complainants



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Patricia Jubin 3030 E. 5th Street Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Jubin:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

<u>Facts</u>

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

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Patricia Jubin Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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Patricia Jubin Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
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Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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Vida Keller, Commissioner
All other Complainants



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail
Donna Nelson
705 Day Lane
Wellington, Nevada 89444

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Nelson:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

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Donna Nelson Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Donna Nelson Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
Bob Hastings, Commissioner
Ray Fierro, Commissioner
Virgil Arellano, Commissioner
Vida Keller, Commissioner
All other Complainants



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Roxanne L. Jones 200 3rd Avenue Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Jones:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Roxanne L. Jones Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

NRS 241.020(2)(c)(1) requires that a public body's agenda provide a "clear and complete statement of the topics scheduled to be considered during the meeting." Nevada's OML seeks to give the public clear notice of the topics to be discussed at public meetings so that the public can attend a meeting when the topic to be discussed is of interest to them. Participation by the public in public meetings is limited to periods of general public comment. NRS 24.020(2)(c)(3). Decisions are made only by the members of the public body.

Clearly the agenda gave the public notice of the topic to be considered by the BOC. Many of the 38 complainants attended the BOC meeting on November 21, 2013, and some made plain their opposition to approval of a bonus of 2.5% and also to a \$350 bonus.

In 2002 this office investigated an OML complaint regarding employee pay raises which alleged a public body took action on a matter not on the agenda. This matter involved a pay raise for two county employees. The public body voted to make the pay raises retroactive. We analyzed whether the public body's vote exceeded the scope of the agenda item. We said:

The complaint alleges that the Board's agenda did not properly notice the public of the action that might be taken with regard to this item, because the Board voted to make the pay increase retroactive. The complaint alleges the retroactivity of the pay increase exceeded the scope of the description of this agenda item.

Roxanne L. Jones Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic," which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE/H. TAYLOR 🖊

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Richard Egan PO Box 396 Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Egan:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

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Richard Egan Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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Richard Egan Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR
Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Tommy W. Cartwright 200 3rd Ave Yerington, Nevada 89447

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Cartwright:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

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18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Tommy W. Cartwright Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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Clearly the agenda gave the public notice of the topic to be considered by the BOC. Many of the 38 complainants attended the BOC meeting on November 21, 2013, and some made plain their opposition to approval of a bonus of 2.5% and also to a \$350 bonus.

In 2002 this office investigated an OML complaint regarding employee pay raises which alleged a public body took action on a matter not on the agenda. This matter involved a pay raise for two county employees. The public body voted to make the pay raises retroactive. We analyzed whether the public body's vote exceeded the scope of the agenda item. We said:

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Tommy W. Cartwright Page 3
January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel

31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada

27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Joe Mortensen, Chairman

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Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail
Larry Talbott
PO Box 1
Smith, Nevada 89430

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Talbott:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

<u>Facts</u>

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Larry Talbott Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

NRS 241.020(2)(c)(1) requires that a public body's agenda provide a "clear and complete statement of the topics scheduled to be considered during the meeting." Nevada's OML seeks to give the public clear notice of the topics to be discussed at public meetings so that the public can attend a meeting when the topic to be discussed is of interest to them. Participation by the public in public meetings is limited to periods of general public comment. NRS 24.020(2)(c)(3). Decisions are made only by the members of the public body.

Clearly the agenda gave the public notice of the topic to be considered by the BOC. Many of the 38 complainants attended the BOC meeting on November 21, 2013, and some made plain their opposition to approval of a bonus of 2.5% and also to a \$350 bonus.

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The complaint alleges that the Board's agenda did not properly notice the public of the action that might be taken with regard to this item, because the Board voted to make the pay increase retroactive. The complaint alleges the retroactivity of the pay increase exceeded the scope of the description of this agenda item.

Larry Talbott Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic," which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GĚORGÉ H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel 31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada

27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447

Joe Mortensen, Chairman

Bob Hastings, Commissioner

Ray Fierro, Commissioner

Virgil Arellano, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail
Mary Urrutia
PO Box 122
Smith. Nevada 89430

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Urrutia:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

<u>Facts</u>

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Mary Urrutia
Page 2
January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

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The complaint alleges that the Board's agenda did not properly notice the public of the action that might be taken with regard to this item, because the Board voted to make the pay increase retroactive. The complaint alleges the retroactivity of the pay increase exceeded the scope of the description of this agenda item.

Mary Urrutia Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic," which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORØE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Margie Forster 3500 Farm District Road Fernley, Nevada 89408

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Forster:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

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18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Margie Forster Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Margie Forster Page 3 January 24, 2014

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Deloris M. Fullenwider 2595 E. 5th Street Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Fullenwider:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

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Deloris M. Fullenwider Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Deloris M. Fullenwider Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
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Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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All other Complainants



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Delbert G. Smith PO Box 88 Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Smith:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

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Delbert G. Smith Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

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Clearly the agenda gave the public notice of the topic to be considered by the BOC. Many of the 38 complainants attended the BOC meeting on November 21, 2013, and some made plain their opposition to approval of a bonus of 2.5% and also to a \$350 bonus.

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Delbert G. Smith Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel Cc: 31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447 Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada 27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447 Joe Mortensen, Chairman Bob Hastings, Commissioner Ray Fierro, Commissioner Virgil Arellano, Commissioner

Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Dorothy Forster PO Box 1621 Fernley, Nevada 89408

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Forster:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Dorothy Forster Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

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Dorothy Forster Page 3 January 24, 2014

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Conclusion

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General

Bv:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
Bob Hastings, Commissioner
Ray Fierro, Commissioner
Virgil Arellano, Commissioner
Vida Keller, Commissioner
All other Complainants



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Rudy Forster PO Box 1621 Fernley, Nevada 89408

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Forster:

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Rudy Forster Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

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We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman

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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

David Lahr 2680 Talapoosa Street Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Lahr:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

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David Lahr Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

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David Lahr Page 3 January 24, 2014

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We are closing our file on this matter.

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CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By: Jenge

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
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Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail
Sandra Mathewson
PO Box 2619
Fernley, Nevada 89408

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Mathewson:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

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We are closing our file on this matter.

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Attorney General

By:

'GEORGÆ'H. TAYLOR ♪

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Joe C. Smith PO Box 9 Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Smith:

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Joe C. Smith Page 3 January 24, 2014

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GEORGE H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
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100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Janice Howell 7820 Remington Road Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Howell:

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Janice Howell Page 2 January 24, 2014

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Attorney General

By:

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
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Joe Mortensen, Chairman
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All other Complainants



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH
Chief of Staff

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Richard Alexander PO Box 731 Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Mr. Alexander:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

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Richard Alexander Page 2 January 24, 2014

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The complaint alleges that the Board's agenda did not properly notice the public of the action that might be taken with regard to this item, because the Board voted to make the pay increase retroactive. The complaint alleges the retroactivity of the pay increase exceeded the scope of the description of this agenda item.

Richard Alexander Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic," which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE'H. TAYLOR

Senior Deputy Attorney General

Open Meeting Law

Office of the Attorney General

Cc: Robert Auer, District Attorney, Lyon County, Counsel
31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada
27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Joe Mortensen, Chairman
Bob Hastings, Commissioner
Ray Fierro, Commissioner

Virgil Arellano, Commissioner Vida Keller, Commissioner



100 North Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH

January 24, 2014

Via First Class Mail

Linda Brown PO Box 41 Silver Springs, Nevada 89429

Re: Open Meeting Law complaint; A.G. File No. 13-039

Dear Ms. Brown:

This office received 38 individual Open Meeting Law complaints, each of which alleged that on November 21, 2013, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) took action on a matter that was not on the agenda.

This Office has jurisdiction to investigate OML complaints and seek civil remedies against public bodies, including injunctive relief, to require compliance with the OML or to prevent violations of the OML. A criminal misdemeanor penalty and a monetary penalty are also authorized relief against individuals in any court of competent jurisdiction. NRS 241.037; NRS 241.040.

Facts

The November 21, 2013 Lyon County Board of Commissioners agenda item at issue read:

18. For possible action – Approve a 2.5% bonus to nonelected Lyon County employees due to the July, 1 2013, General Fund Beginning Fund Balance being higher than anticipated in the Budget (County manager).

Linda Brown Page 2 January 24, 2014

County District Attorney Robert Auer's advice about a possible notice or agenda problem if the BOC approved an amount less than 2.5%. Mr. Auer informed them that members of the public received adequate notice of the topic to be discussed and he did not see any problem with approving an amount less than 2.5%.

Discussion

NRS 241.020(2)(c)(1) requires that a public body's agenda provide a "clear and complete statement of the topics scheduled to be considered during the meeting." Nevada's OML seeks to give the public clear notice of the topics to be discussed at public meetings so that the public can attend a meeting when the topic to be discussed is of interest to them. Participation by the public in public meetings is limited to periods of general public comment. NRS 24.020(2)(c)(3). Decisions are made only by the members of the public body.

Clearly the agenda gave the public notice of the topic to be considered by the BOC. Many of the 38 complainants attended the BOC meeting on November 21, 2013, and some made plain their opposition to approval of a bonus of 2.5% and also to a \$350 bonus.

In 2002 this office investigated an OML complaint regarding employee pay raises which alleged a public body took action on a matter not on the agenda. This matter involved a pay raise for two county employees. The public body voted to make the pay raises retroactive. We analyzed whether the public body's vote exceeded the scope of the agenda item. We said:

The complaint alleges that the Board's agenda did not properly notice the public of the action that might be taken with regard to this item, because the Board voted to make the pay increase retroactive. The complaint alleges the retroactivity of the pay increase exceeded the scope of the description of this agenda item.

Linda Brown Page 3 January 24, 2014

Our opinion in OMLO 2002-44 closely supports our view that the BOC's vote to approve an employee bonus of \$350 was a topic that fit within the scope of the agenda item #18. The public should have been on notice of the possibility that the BOC may have elected a bonus less than 2.5%. The important lesson to be learned from the "clear and complete" rule as applied to the facts of this case is the distinction between "topic," which is a very general term, and is capable of being broadly defined, and complainant's assertion that the BOC's agenda item #18 could only be approved if the bonus was 2.5%. Complainant's interpretation is too narrow. We think that a bonus in any amount less than 2.5% would have been within the scope of agenda item #18 because the topic being discussed and voted on was "bonus," not the 2.5% amount.

Conclusion

The BOC did not take action on a matter on the November 21, 2013 agenda. The action taken by the BOC was clearly within the scope of agenda item #18.

We are closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

Attorney General

By:

GEORGE H. TAYLOR

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31 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447
Board of County Commissioners for Lyon County Nevada

27 South Main Street, Yerington, Nevada 89447 Joe Mortensen, Chairman

Joe Mortensen, Chairman Bob Hastings, Commissioner Ray Fierro, Commissioner Virgil Arellano, Commissioner Vida Keller, Commissioner