

Time for voters to do their job – learn about candidates

Lake Tahoe News on Oct. 1 will begin profiling candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council and Douglas County Commission.

✖ Ten people are running for three council seats. No incumbents are running. Two of the candidates did not answer the questions. A phone message was left for each to ensure they had received the emailed questions.

Four people are running for two commission seats. The incumbents each face a challenger. (Howell v. McDermid and Bonner v. Brady.)

Candidate responses will run in the order they were returned to *Lake Tahoe News*. None of the candidates knew this until now. One will run each day for 12 days.

Lake Tahoe News gave the candidates 10 days to answer the questions. The idea was this would give them ample time to think about their answers and do any necessary research. They were allowed to write as much as they wanted to. Ignore any reference to being limited to a paragraph or two. They were only limited by waiting until the last minute, not by space constraints put on them by *LTN*.

As some have said, the South Shore is at a tipping point. Sink or soar is how *Lake Tahoe News* likes to look at the immediate future for the area. It does matter who is elected on both sides of the state line. This election may prove more critical than many in recent history.

Who best understands the tourism-based economy of the South Shore? Who best understands financial issues? Who can work best together with others and build consensus? Who has vision?

These are the questions *Lake Tahoe News* poses to the electorate.

Read the answers – all of them. Compare them. Who best reflects what you want the South Shore to look like when their four-year term is up? Who best seems to understand the issues? Who has provided substance and not rhetoric? Who can answer the questions now and not wait until they are in office? Who can hit the road running and not need a learning curve?

For four council candidates, pay attention to the response to this question: *You and three other council candidates met with the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce. Tell us about that meeting.* Not everyone agrees this was a chamber meeting. Odd. We think prospective councilmembers should know where they are going and whom they are speaking with.

And, yes, they should talk to all chambers and all other groups. It's important to hear what business groups, other special segments of town and individuals want and believe are concerns. We don't want people elected who only listen to their inner circle. But we do want councilmembers to know whom they are talking to and taking advice from.

These people will represent all of us. That's a bit of the quirkiness about living next to another state. What the council does affects people in Douglas County. What the commission does affects people in South Lake Tahoe. Although we only get to vote in one location, both bodies impact all of our lives on the South Shore.

To that end, it is imperative as citizens we get involved. It starts with registering to vote. Read the answers the candidates gave *Lake Tahoe News*. If your question wasn't asked, ask the candidates yourself.

Most of them are doing their job by familiarizing themselves with the issues. Now it's time to do yours by getting educated about whom to vote for.

There will be a City Council candidates forum on Oct. 14 at 9:30am at Inn by the Lake's conference center. This is sponsored by *Lake Tahoe News*, South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association, and South Tahoe Association of Realtors. Everyone is invited to attend.