

Concerts, kayaks, food – all part of Lakeview Commons

By Kathryn Reed

It will neither be Julie Andrews making the hills come alive with the sound of music nor the bass of bands from SnowGlobe. Instead, a mix of jazz, reggae and blues are expected to resonate from Lakeview Commons this summer.

OnCourse Events has been granted a permit to bring music to the South Lake Tahoe venue. Every Thursday starting June 28 through Sept. 6 from 4-8:30pm a different band will perform on a temporary stage that will be built in the sand. Spectators can sit – for free – on the terraced area or up top where there are picnic tables.

“I want to introduce locals to different music,” Rob Giustina, with OnCourse Events, told *Lake Tahoe News*. He expects most acts will be from out of the area. However, the first band is likely to be Jump Start, though local, they don’t often play in the basin.



Free concerts on Thursdays are coming to Lakeview Commons starting in late June. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Giustina is more often associated with competition event productions. But as someone who was born and raised here, he wants to help the town resurrect itself in terms of fun and economics.

"I wanted to be proactive in saving our community," Giustina said.

He expects to make money on the summer concert series selling booth space at \$75 a pop for a 10-foot-by-10-foot spot. Artists, nonprofits – he will consider them all. Vendors will be at the top of the commons area.

Until the city votes on who will be operating the food part of the Lakeview Commons, Giustina is holding off on deciding what type of food will be sold. He doesn't want to compete with the concessionaire, but instead complement or have his vendors be completely different. But he also hopes to have a beer garden.

Bids for the food concessionaire closed April 27. It's possible the City Council could make a decision at its May 17 meeting.

For people wanting to be part of Giustina's Live at Lakeview Commons Concert Series, email him at rob@oncourseevents.com.

Giustina is encouraging people arrive by bike. A valet will be operating for storage purposes during the concert.

As for what the city plans to do at Lakeview Commons, the rest rooms and drinking fountain should be in operation any day. Bathrooms will always be a seasonal operation based on demand, and the water will operate when the threat of frozen pipes is eliminated.

On the May 1 council agenda is an item to award the nonmotorized concessionaire to Standup Paddle, which has a shop on Harrison Avenue.

"Whoever gets the contract will have to do their own tenant

improvements,” Stan Sherer, community services director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. The city will take a percentage of the gross profits, with it topping out at 12 percent.

In addition to the rental of paddleboards, kayaks and canoes will also be available.

Per the original plans when the \$6.5 million Lakeview Commons project was conceived, people will also be able to store their nonmotorized craft at the boathouse for a fee.

Right now garbage cans without lids are scattered about Lakeview Commons. Sherer said those will be converted to bear-proof containers soon. A bid on the project is on Tuesday’s council agenda.

Landscapers will be back out there this week to finish the plantings.

Sherer told *Lake Tahoe News* his intent is to make the area accessible to dogs – legally. Plenty of people take their dogs to the commons and El Dorado Beach, but that is violating the current law.

Something that perplexes Sherer is why in the original plans there was no place to dump ashes from the barbecues.

“It’s not just having a facility to empty the briquettes, it’s will they use them or will they try to dispose of them someplace else,” Sherer said people who are barbecuing. The fear of someplace is it could cause a fire or contaminate Lake Tahoe.

A solution as of last week had not been found. And they are being used. Smoke has been seen wafting from the grounds on the unseasonably warm days.

While the area has been transformed and looks nothing like it once did, all the boulders on the north end mean beachgoers can no longer walk very far. It used to be people could walk

to Ski Run Marina and beyond.

A pipe on El Dorado Beach that used to be ghastly, especially as water drained directly into Lake Tahoe, is still there. Only now sand covers part of the upper part of the metal, and boulders and branches cover the lower section. Gunk, well, it still flows into the lake from Highway 50.

On June 20 at 2pm there will be a grand opening – again – of Lakeview Commons. This time Secretary of Natural Resources John Laird is supposed to attend the dedication, as will members of the California Tahoe Conservancy and its board. It was CTC money that funded the project.

What name it will be dedicated as, well, that remains to be seen.

A beach party will follow at 3pm.

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