

South Lake Tahoe City Council to appoint fifth member; Lovell-Sass-Grego want the seat

By Kathryn Reed

Three people familiar to South Lake Tahoe voters have told *Lake Tahoe News* they want to be appointed to the City Council – Kathay Lovell, Austin Sass and Bruce Grego.



With Claire Fortier abandoning her seat midterm, it means the four remaining members were left with the decision to either appointment a replacement or call for an election. On Dec. 27, they unanimously agreed to have people apply, then go through a public interview process before the council picks the fifth member.

Any registered voter living in the city limits has until Jan. 25 to apply. Applications should be available next week through the city clerk's office.

Interviews will be conducted Feb. 5 at the start of the regular council meeting. It's then likely that person will be sworn in that day and expected to have read the agenda in order to be able to vote on items.

The term expires in December 2014.

Lovell was on the council for two terms before deciding not to run again in 2010.

"I feel like there is more to do and I want to be part of it," Lovell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Lovell said when Fortier first indicated months ago that she would not fulfill her commitment she began thinking about getting back on the council.

Sass, who came in third in the November council race, and Grego, who was fourth, were at Tuesday's meeting listening to the council weigh the pros and cons about how to fill the vacancy.

The council had the option to pick someone who was on the November ballot. While the electeds did not go that route, nothing is preventing the men from filling out the paperwork for consideration.

Sass and Grego said after the meeting they each intend to file an application.

At the meeting John Cefalu, Kenny Curtzwiler and Mike McKeen spoke in favor of Grego being appointed.

Grego has the distinction of being one of less than a handful of people to ever have been appointed to the council. This happened after then Mayor Terry Trupp was arrested in June 1989 on a slew of federal drug charges stemming from Operation Deep Snow. He was not elected after the appointment expired. Grego was elected four years ago before being voted off seven weeks ago.

Four letters were read into the record – all in support of Sass being on the council. Those were from Harold Anino, Pat Pohl, Josh Benin and Toogee Sielsch. Sass has twice unsuccessfully run for the council.

The cost of an election – which could have been as much as \$15,000 – was the overriding reason the council chose the appointment route. Second, was the desire to have a full council before the next possible election date. Had it been a mail-in election, May would have been the time frame; the soonest a traditional election could have been called was

June.