

Paid parking opponents win in South Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Say goodbye to South Lake Tahoe's parking meters at Lakeview Commons and Lakeside Beach.

The voters on June 3 said take them out. This will happen after Labor Day.

With 100 percent of the precincts reporting, the yes votes were 1,271 at 68.41 percent and the no votes were 587 at 31.59 percent.

"I think the people have spoken very well; that they just don't like it," John Cefalu said of paid parking.

Cefalu was one of the main opponents to the meters and early leader to force the city's hand to change its policy.

"For the city to make the argument that this is a fundamental part of the budget and they need the revenue, I just can't buy it," Cefalu told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The city's latest paid parking program has not been welcome since the get-go. Meetings were often contentious, with name-calling and anger the norm instead of civility and compromise.

While a group called Tahoe 4 Tahoe secured enough signatures to take the question of paid parking to the voters, legally they could not do so because of how the Vehicle Code is written when it comes to parking meters. Had it gone to court the city would have likely won based on past rulings. In the end, though, the City Council decided it was better for the voters to decide and the city put the measure on the ballot.

"I just hope that the vitriol is over. We are getting a lot

done in this town with marginal revenue,” Mayor Hal Cole told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We need to all start pulling in the same direction moving forward. A lot more investment is needed.”

The decision does not affect the parking garage at Heavenly Village or the meters on Bellamy Court.

“It means we have to find a way to plug a hole that the lost revenue will create. We will be discussing that at the next council meeting,” City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*.