

EDC lets economic stimulus policy lapse

By Kathryn Reed

Even though a goal of El Dorado County's Board of Supervisors is economic development, a policy to stimulate such growth has been abandoned.

But it might be resurrected now that it has been called to the attention of Supervisor Sue Novasel. After *Lake Tahoe News* inquired about what is known as Policy J-7, Novasel decided to reverse course.

"Supervisor Novasel asked that it be reinstated at the earliest possibility," Judi McCallum, Novasel's assistant, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "She met with Assistant CAO Shawne Corley, who is now working with Economic Development Manager Jeff McLaughlin to get J-7 onto the Board of Supervisors' agenda on April 19 with additions that Jeff McLaughlin is working on."

It was on Dec. 17, 2013, that the board directed staff to prepare an economic policy to include incentive tools designed to attract, support and expand economic development in the county. On Feb. 11, 2014, the board approved what became Policy J-7. It was revised on Feb. 10, 2015, and had a sunset date of Nov. 10, 2015.

The policy stated, "The purpose of this policy is to: A. Identify targeted business sectors that have the highest potential for growth and will offer the highest economic impact through the use of incentives. B. Identify economic incentive options. C. Establish a formalized analysis, fair process, and transparent review of economic development incentives for businesses starting in, expanding in, or locating to El Dorado County. D. Ensure any and all incentives

offered to job-creating firms in El Dorado County offer benefit to the goals of the County as well as the business.”

That all goes hand-in-hand with the strategic plan the board is working under.

The chief administrative officer was supposed to write detailed procedures, but never did.

Creighton Avila, spokesman for the County Administrative Office, did not know if was a conscious decision to let the policy lapse or an oversight on behalf of staff and the electeds.

He added that one company, Bloo Solar, tried to take advantage of the policy, but never received compensation.