

SLT to discuss future of city manager, city attorney

By Kathryn Reed

The South Lake Tahoe City Council on April 17 is expected to make progress on finding a city manager and city attorney.

Mayor Wendy David at last week's meeting asked for the topic to be put on the next agenda.

Since then Fire Chief Jeff Meston has **tendered his resignation** as acting city manager.

David told *Lake Tahoe News* she expects the agenda item to be written in such a way that short-term and long-term solutions for that position can be discussed. She also wants to discuss whether to hire in-house counsel or a firm to handle the legal issues.

While the midyear budget was discussed at the April 3 meeting, little was agreed to. What wasn't in the proposal from staff was hiring an interim city manager because it was assumed Meston would do it through September without added compensation.

The electeds next week should also have multiple recruiting firms from which to choose. It remains to be seen if the same firm can be used for both positions.

"I'm very appreciative of him stepping up to perform as our acting city manager, while also holding two other positions at same time," David said of Meston. "It's been a strain on his time. I understand he has other priorities and that we need to look for an interim city manager."

The vacancy was created earlier this year when the council opted to sever ties with City Manager Nancy Kerry for

undisclosed reasons.

Letter: Filipino community takes turn at B&B

To the community,

On March 29, Bread & Broth's Monday meal diners had a special treat, a delicious Filipino themed dinner. The evening's meal was lovingly prepared and served by the Filipino community members for their annual Adopt a Day of Nourishment sponsorship.

This fantastic group served up teriyaki chicken and vegetables, chicken adobo, steamed rice, coleslaw topped off with delicious desserts to the 93 attending dinner guests. Needless to say, there were no leftovers at the end of the meal.

To prepare their meal the sponsor cooks began preparing the ingredients on Sunday, working late into the night and showing up again on early Monday afternoon to help with the dinner's setup and finalize the cooking of the meal's dishes. Once again coordinating the Filipino community AAD sponsorship dinner was Mila Seal who coordinated with the dinner's anonymous donor and organized the 14 Filipino community members who participated in and lent their support to the dinner.

"Once again, we would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to St. Theresa's Bread & Broth for giving us the opportunity to share our time and blessings to our less fortunate brothers and sister," wrote Seal. "And also, we want

to thank each and everyone in the Filipino community, who without question, participated and shared their time, money, and effort to make this Adopt a Day possible. Again, thank you so much and God bless us all.”

B&B is so very fortunate to have this wonderful group share their tasty cuisine and loving spirit with our dinner guests.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Placer County working on sustainability plan

Placer County is in the process of developing a sustainability plan, outlining ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and manage climate risks that threaten property value, natural resources and quality of life.

Two community workshops will offer a chance to learn about the plan’s purpose and goals, and how to become involved in the planning process.

The plan inventories current sources of greenhouse gas emissions in unincorporated Placer County and will outline the county’s strategy to reduce them in a way that maximizes economic benefits from energy savings and operational costs, improves infrastructure and further benefits the county and community. Additionally, the plan is intended to provide a streamlined environmental review process related to GHG emissions analysis for land development projects.

It will also describe strategies to prepare the county and residents to reduce and adapt to the effects of climate risks

like wildfire, drought and flood.

California law calls for reducing greenhouse gas emissions statewide to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

Placer expects to complete its sustainability plan in spring 2019.

The workshops will be April 24 in Loomis and April 25 in Kings Beach. Both will begin with a presentation by county staff, with staff available afterward to answer questions and take feedback in an open-house style workshop.

The Kings Beach event will be from 6-8pm at North Tahoe Event Center.

Institutional investors an issue in Calif. housing

By Matt Levin, CalMatters

Astronomical prices are forcing a rising share of California families to postpone buying a house. As a result, the state's record-low homeownership rate has been a boon to one growing segment of California's housing market: single-family home rentals.

Between 2005 and 2015, the number of owner-occupied homes in California shrunk by nearly 64,000 units, according to the Public Policy Institute of California. Meanwhile the number of renter-occupied homes increased dramatically. California now has 450,000 more homes used as rentals than it did a decade ago. Compare that to the 1990s, when the number of rented homes grew by less than 120,000 while the state added 700,000

homes owned by the people who live in them.

The rising tide of single-family rentals has renewed attention on who actually receives the rent payments that nearly 2 million Californians make each month. Lawmakers and first-time homeowner advocates have been scrutinizing a relatively new form of landlord: private investment firms that snapped up thousands of homes during the foreclosure crisis and now rent them out. With nearly one in four California homes now purchased in all-cash, these well-financed institutional investors have also been blamed as unfair competition against families bidding on starter homes.

So how much are institutional investors impacting California's housing prices? The data says not so much now.

Institutional investors accounted for less than 2 percent of California single-family home sales last year.

Typically the term "institutional investor" refers to private investment firms that buy dozens of residential properties with the explicit aim of generating a steady income stream through rentals. Often they invest the money of wealthy individuals and public pension funds, like those established for California state workers and teachers.

The best example is Blackstone, a publicly traded Wall Street firm that barrelled into the country's single-family home market in the depths of the Great Recession in the late 2000s. Through its residential investment-focused subsidiary, Invitation Homes, Blackstone is now the largest owner of single-family homes nationwide. In California, they own about 13,000 homes.

But firms such as Blackstone have stopped buying wide swaths of California homes. According to the real estate data firm ATTOM Data Solutions, which defines institutional investors as entities that buy 10 or more homes in a given year, institutional investors accounted for less than 2 percent of

the state's single-family home and condo sales in 2017.

That's a pretty steep drop from as recently as 2012, when institutional investors accounted for about 7 percent of sales.

Why the decline? California no longer has a glut of cheap houses that can be easily gobbled up in foreclosure auctions. A sustained economic recovery and a lack of construction of new housing has sent housing prices skyrocketing. It's now too expensive for institutional investors to buy lots of California homes. Blackstone's Invitation Homes bought only 82 California houses last year.

"The low inventory and homeownership rates are good (for investors) if they own the property—it means more renters," says Daren Blomquist, senior vice president at the real estate data firm ATTOM. "But it's bad if they're trying to acquire more properties."

Those all-cash offers beating out would-be homebuyers aren't coming from large investment firms anymore. Wealthy "mom-and-pop" landlords—families that can afford to buy another house and rent it out as an investment—now dominate the single-family rental market. Among all single-family rentals nationally, about 80 percent are owned by individuals that rent out just one or two homes, according to ATTOM.

But aren't institutional investors keeping houses off the market—and doesn't that drive up prices?

Institutional investors aren't keeping enough homes off the market statewide to blame them wholesale for California's astronomical housing prices. But in certain local markets—especially in areas hit hard by the foreclosure crisis, such as the Central Valley and Inland Empire—it's impossible to pretend they have no influence.

Among cities with at least 100,000 residents, Sacramento has

seen the most properties sold to institutional investors since 2007, according to ATTOM's data—about 6 percent of all homes sold in the city during that time span. San Bernardino and neighboring Rialto have seen the largest share of their housing stock bought by institutional investors, at roughly 10 percent. Firms have largely stayed away from Bay Area cities, where the foreclosure crisis was less acute and where housing prices are among the most expensive in the country.

"We do not believe our activity impacts prices at any level," a spokeswoman for Blackstone subsidiary Invitation Homes wrote in response to questions.

Institutional investors have targeted the typical starter home in these cities—three bedroom, two bath houses at a price point that a few years ago could have been afforded by younger families. So in some cases, would-be first-time homebuyers are now renting in places they may have bought just a few years ago.

Still, investment firm ownership in these areas is much lower than in Atlanta or Phoenix, where they've made nearly one in four home purchases. And young families are more likely to rent homes from smaller landlords.

Reports of institutional investors making all-cash offers on California homes caught the attention of state Sen. Ian Calderon, D-Whittier, when he was attempting to move out of his apartment and purchase his first house last year. While the 32-year-old lawmaker acknowledges that institutional investors don't own a large chunk of California's housing stock, he says he's concerned their influence is yet another hurdle for young homebuyers to overcome.

"I just want to be able to have more information about these firms, and ultimately I want to advantage first-time homebuyers," said Calderon. "I want to make sure that people aren't getting screwed."

Multiple attempts by Calderon to impose more transparency on institutional investor activity while blunting their ability to make all-cash offers have not gone far in the Legislature. Two years ago, a bill that would have forced homeowners to wait 90 days before selling to large institutional investors failed to clear both chambers with that provision intact.

Last year, a bill that would have required investors who own more than 100 properties in California to register with the state and provide detailed information on their activities again failed to reach the governor's desk. Caldeorn says there's a good chance that bill will be resuscitated this year.

The California Apartment Association, which represents landlords across the state for both multifamily and single-family units, has opposed much of Calderon's legislation, arguing that much of the information it seeks is available in public stock exchange filings. That's mostly true, but that only applies to publicly traded firms, and the data is not in the most accessible format.

Landlords also says Calderon's bill doesn't address the root cause of the problem.

"The bottom line here is about supply," said Debra Carlton, lobbyist for the California Apartment Association. "There's just not enough housing to go around so you end up in these unfortunate situations where people can't buy and can't afford a place to rent."

Bi-state evacuation drill planned for North Shore

A full scale simulated wildland fire and community evacuation drill will be staged at the Tahoe Biltmore in Crystal Bay on May 19.

North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District along with Washoe County Emergency Management, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, Nevada Highway Patrol, California Highway Patrol, North Tahoe Fire Protection District, CalFire, Placer County Emergency Management, Placer County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross, IVGID, and partnering agencies will be participating.

On the day of the drill, Kings Beach and Incline Village/Crystal Bay residents will be receiving a reverse dial 911 call, which will test the system announcing the drill. The bi-state fire evacuation drill will affect Kings Beach, Incline Village and Crystal Bay neighborhoods, affecting approximately 1,100 residents. Residents are asked to voluntarily evacuate to Tahoe Biltmore.

Anyone may attend the drill and safety fair at the evacuation center and incident command post inside the Tahoe Biltmore between 9:30am and 2:30pm.

There will be a free lunch, information booths and displays. Helicopters will be performing water drops above Crystal Bay. For a map of the affected areas and emergency preparedness classes, go **online**.

OMG fun run registration open

Registration is open for the June 3 OMG Fun Run.

For a few hours, leopards, butterflies, world-class athletes and Tahoe style entertainment will take over Old Meyers Grade. Costumes are encouraged and the best costume in each division (12 and under, women, and men) will receive a prize. Additional prizes will be awarded for the first to reach the top and most laps in each division. Winners in each category and participants who complete at least three laps will have their names posted on the OMG website after the event.

Old Meyers Grade is located 0.1 miles up South Upper Truckee Road. The course gate-to-gate round trip is 2.6 miles. The event will be held rain or shine. Refreshments will be provided.

Proceeds will go to fund, support and promote creative and sustainable projects community-enhancing events in Meyers.

The 10am-noon event will at to be on Old Meyers Grade in Meyers. Advanced registration is \$15 for adults and \$5 for 12 and under, free for 5 and younger. It includes an OMG T-shirt. Registration the day of the event is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children and will be onsite at Old Meyers Grade from 8:30-9:30am.

Sierra-at-Tahoe **athletes**

bring Olympics home



Jamie Anderson and Hannah Teter celebrate their accomplishments at Sierra-at-Tahoe on April 7. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Susan Wood

TWIN BRIDGES – Sharing their Olympic experience in full circle, medalists Jamie Anderson and Hannah Teter came home to Sierra-at-Tahoe Saturday to celebrate with about 500 friends, families and fans.

The Winter Games in South Korea are but a distant memory, but etched in the hearts and minds of those of all ages who turned out was the community spirit that spawned these extraordinary athletes.



Jamie Anderson signs a helmet, one of many personal items people brought to be autographed. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Anderson and Teter have won gold medals in different Winter Games, celebrating in grand style **four years ago** when they arrived at the Sierra plaza in a vintage fire truck with a parade of dignitaries. This year's event was smaller in blustery weather, but no less enthusiastic.

In viewing the autograph line set up at the Solstice, it was hard to know who was more excited about meeting these women who call Sierra their home resort – the kids or the adults.



Sierra-at-Tahoe General Manager John Rice's philosophy of making the resort a family helps foster the development of Olympic-caliber athletes.

Mercedes Rodrigues of San Mateo could hardly contain herself.

"I was shaking," she said, describing the moment she walked up to Anderson and Teter to have them sign posters. She was smiling from ear to ear as her 10-year-old son, Cameron, was quite relaxed. The family watches Olympic sports as diligently as they bring their season passes to ski at Sierra.

"I want to try to win everything," she said, peering over the signed memorabilia in the silent auction.



Nolan and Maia Vo are fans of Hannah Teter's. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Before and after Anderson and Teter appeared before a swarm of cameras, South Lake Tahoe Mayor Wendy David and Sierra-at-Tahoe General Manager John Rice gave personal accounts of what the experience means to them.

Nods were given to other Sierra homespun athletes, Maddie Bowman and Kyle Smaine, who couldn't make it since they're in Mammoth and Russia, respectively. On occasion, fans, Teter and Anderson would hold up giant "fathead" cutouts of them to remind all just how large the Sierra family is.

David told the crowd how proud she is of these homegrown athletes, characterizing the experience as a "unique and treasured opportunity."

Then, she proceeded to mention her humbling experience at Sierra-at-Tahoe years ago.

"Like many of you, many of my memories center around Sierra-at-Tahoe. My first time on skis was here on this mountain. I was terrible and had to be guided off the mountain by the ski patrol down Sugar and Spice before darkness hit," she said of the green run that winds around from the summit to the base

lodge. “It is here that I blew out my ACL (knee ligament), came down off the mountain on a sled, only to be greeted by a ski school class of preschoolers, most of whom I was teaching.”



South Lake Tahoe Mayor Wendy David and Sierra General Manager John Rice celebrate the athletes' success. Photo/Kathryn Reed

David taught Bowman, who seized the opportunity to get in on the 4.0 GPA program Sierra established years ago. The program awards a Sierra season pass to Lake Tahoe Unified School District students who receive straight A's. Hundreds of South Shore youth have taken advantage of the program. As a former LTUSD trustee, David told *Lake Tahoe News* she credits that program with providing students like Bowman valuable time on the slopes honing their craft.

Rice was no less personal in addressing his pride directed at these athletes who train on his turf.

"I'm very humbled and honored to be here," Rice told the attentive crowd. He attributes much of **the resort's success** in

cultivating these winners to not only the programs but the parents, coaches, community and the sheer fun of the mountain's culture.



Cut outs of Maddie Bowman and Kyle Smaine are reminders of Sierra's depth in high-level competitors. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The Sierra Olympic quest all started with Travis Cabral, now a South Lake Tahoe police officer serving his community in other ways.

Rice recalled how Cabral – in pure, no-frills Sierra style – said all he needed to succeed were a season pass, shovel and locker, and he was set.

When Bowman, Anderson and Teter entered the scene, Rice thought: "These girls are crushing it."

With a few giggles from the crowd, Rice talked about how a younger Anderson was motivated by Starburst candy she knew he often had in his office. She also knew to go to him with her French fry craving and for a ride.

"Jamie, she's in a different class, a different league now," he said, having cultivated "this small town girl" with a

unique talent into a renowned sensation worthy of celebrity status.

A younger Teter showed up from Vermont and also humbly asked Rice for a pass in order to train to make the U.S. Olympic Ski Team. Then she won a gold medal in Italy over a decade ago.

“I asked her if she wanted two passes (after that),” Rice said to audience laughter. “We’ve kept her on because she’s so much a part of our brand.”

Indeed, she is. Teter took a moment to tell *Lake Tahoe News* she plans to split her snowboarding time next season between a few competitions and a lot of “soul riding” – illustrating just how mentally spiritual the sport can be. She calls moving to Tahoe “one of the best decisions she’s ever made in her life.” Teter’s eyes lit up when she declared she’d like to compete in Beijing for the next Winter Games in 2022.

“I feel like I still have the gusto. I just have to mix it up,” she said about trying new things. In the meantime, her charitable work and maple syrup operation get her attention still.

Her comrade, Anderson, was no less genuine – proudly wearing the honor of being a Meyers resident where she was home-schooled and “Sierra was my day care.”

The crowd whooped it up.

Anderson, the first female snowboarder to win more than one Olympic gold medal, later told *Lake Tahoe News* this most recent gold medal performance was “even sweeter” than the first in Russia because it was won “under enormous pressure.”



Jamie Anderson's medals from the 2018 Winter Games. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The 28-year-old snowboarder won gold in the inaugural women's slopestyle event in 2014 in Sochi, then made a repeat performance at the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang a few months ago. She also took home silver this year in the first big air competition – an event with a launching ramp of 160 feet.

Teter, 31, won the gold medal in halfpipe at the 2006 Winter Olympics in Torino and silver at the 2010 Games in Vancouver. She placed fourth in Sochi. She missed making the 2018 team by one spot.

Both women were handed a special basket provided by the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority and a bouquet of flowers to go with the adoration.

"I think these athletes have really turned the world's eyes on us (in Tahoe). It just shows what kind of athlete we produce in this environment," LTVA Executive Director Carol Chaplin told *LTN*.

Who's next? Perhaps it will be 7-year-old Nolan Vo or 10-year-old Maia Vo of Orinda – who drove up to stand in line at their home resort to meet Anderson and Teter with their parents, Long and Mimi.

Or could it be a very shy but intense-looking Taylor Sheldon, 6, of El Dorado Hills?

“She’s been so excited about this all week,” her mother, Melissa Sheldon, said.

Anderson had a special message for all the kids: “Just find something you really love, look out for each other and never give up on your dream.”

Opinion: Are teenagers smarter and better than we think?

By Tara Parker-Pope, New York Times

Today’s teenagers have been raised on cellphones and social media. Should we worry about them or just get out of their way?

A recent wave of student protests around the country has provided a close-up view of Generation Z in action, and many adults have been surprised. While there has been much hand-wringing about this cohort, also called iGen or the Post-Millennials, the stereotype of a disengaged, entitled and social-media-addicted generation doesn’t match the poised, media-savvy and inclusive young people leading the protests and gracing magazine covers.

There’s 18-year-old Emma González, whose shaved head, impassioned speeches and torn jeans have made her the iconic face of the #NeverAgain movement, which developed after the 17 shooting deaths in February at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High

School in Parkland, Fla. Naomi Wadler, just 11, became an overnight sensation after confidently telling a national television audience she represented “African-American girls whose stories don’t make the front page of every national newspaper.” David Hogg, a high school senior at Stoneman Douglas, has weathered numerous personal attacks with the disciplined calm of a seasoned politician.

Read the whole story

Study: Science lacking in rules governing hunting

By Jason Daley, Sierra

Hunting in the United States and Canada is very different than in other parts of the world. Over the last 150 years, the hunting community and managers have developed a system called the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. In short, in other places, like Europe, wild game is considered the property of private landowners. In North America, things are more democratic—wildlife is considered a public trust, one that needs to be managed as a sustainable public resource for the benefit of everyone. And to make sure that happens, the model dictates that decisions for how to keep herds of elk, deer, bear, and other animals healthy be based on the best available science.

But in a new paper in the journal *Science Advances*, researcher Kyle Artelle, formerly of Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, and his colleagues take a look at whether hunt

management systems in the United States and Canada hew to some basic scientific standards. What they found is that a majority fail to meet the four hallmarks they map out, which they say act as a litmus test for science-based claims.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce is having a charity mixer for Connect for Kids on April 26, 5:30-8:30pm at South Lake Brewing Company, with food by Verde. Cost is \$15 for members, \$20 for others.
- On April 10 the Douglas County School District board of education is expected to approve a 3 percent salary increase for Superintendent Teri White that will be retroactive to July 1, 2017.
- Here is the Sierra roadwork schedule from Caltrans for the next week.
- Leadership Lake Tahoe is having a fundraiser May 10, 5-9pm to raise funds and support for microscopes to advance K-5 education in Lake Tahoe Unified School District. The event is at Tahoe AleWorx.
- Tahoe Truckee Snapshot Day, a water quality watershed monitoring event, will be May 19 starting at 9am. Meet at Lake Tahoe Community College. Teams led by trained volunteers will go out to streams throughout South Tahoe to collect data to create a snapshot in time of water quality.