Mandatory commercial garbage service for South Tahoe



By Kathryn Reed

Mandatory commercial trash pick up in South Lake Tahoe is closer to becoming a reality.

The City Council on Dec. 8 voted 5-0 to direct staff to come up with an ordinance that would require every business in town pay for garbage service. Right now it is voluntary.

South Tahoe Refuse has 610 collection accounts and more than 400 customers who haul the trash themselves to the transfer station.

Residences already have mandatory garbage pick up in the city limits. That bill includes being able to put out an unlimited number of cans or bags on a weekly basis.

Commercial customers are not expected to be offered the same deal.

As it is now, commercial businesses pay based on the size of the dumpster and how many times STR empties it, or by how much is dumped at the station.

Some businesses are notorious for having overflowing trash containers. The ones behind Ross are often full, with debris flowing into open space.

Bad business operators are the impetus for the change.

Enforcement is an issue Assistant City Manager Rick Angelocci said would need to be worked out as the ordinance is written.

With mandatory garbage service, Angelocci said the city would then have the power to tell businesses that let garbage spill out that they must use the next size container to hold everything.

The nuisance abatement program South Tahoe has now is a bit cumbersome and with the city losing a community service officer, enforcement is a huge issue.

With residential customers who donâ€™t pay their bill, a lien can be put on the property. If commercial service becomes mandatory, liens often are not an option because so many business owners are leasing the space and there is nothing to put a lien on.

One reason South Tahoe Refuse likes the idea is being able to recycle more waste from commercial businesses.

Without knowing the fee structure, itâ€™s hard to know how this is going to affect STRâ€™s bottom line.

City staff will also have to work out how this will be equitable for businesses. A small massage business does not produce much waste, while a restaurant is one of the biggest producers of garbage.

Another issue is that many landlords combine garbage â€“ and water â€“ into the rent. Whether mandatory commercial service will increase what a landlord pays is not known. Therefore it is not known if this will be another financial burden on small business owners or just a means to keep the town clean, with more waste being recycled.

How the fee structure will work for a standalone entity vs. a strip mall that may have one dumpster for multiple businesses is not known.

The ordinance will be brought to the council in early 2010.

USFS looking for comments on inter-agency pass rules

The U.S. Forest Service is inviting comments on a proposed policy for the acceptance of inter-agency passes at concession-operated campgrounds and day use recreation sites on National Forests and Grasslands. The policy would provide for coordination with concessionaires to promote sustainable operations.

Under the proposed policy, the Forest Service would offer a 10 percent discount at concession run campgrounds and standard amenity day use sites to holders of Golden Age and Golden Access Passports and Senior and Access Passes. Further, concessionaires would offer free usage of these day use sites to holders of an Annual or Volunteer Pass.

The proposal is open to a 60-day public notice and comment period. The public can review the proposed policy in the Federal Register (Vol. 229, No. 74, December 1, 2009) or at http://www.fs.fed.us/specialuses. Comments may be filed on line at www.regulations.gov (search for Notice ID FS-2009-0001).

Lovell mayor of SLT; sediment, pot, green building on agenda

By Kathryn Reed

Kathay Lovell took the gavel from Jerry Birdwell on Dec. 8 – as expected. The 3-2 vote to have her become mayor of South Lake Tahoe was also predictable.

Birdwell and Councilman Bill Crawford did not want her to take the helm again – a position she has had twice in seven years in office. Crawford has never been mayor and has served the same length of time, though not consecutive terms.



Kathay Lovell

The transaction was short and sweet, with no pontificating by any of the councilmembers.

Hal Cole is mayor pro tem. All but Crawford voted for that appointment.

The honorary positions are one-year terms.

In other action on Dec. 8:

- The council listened to a lengthy presentation by Harold Singer, executive director of Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. He talked about the need to

reduce fine sediment from going into Lake Tahoe and how the city will have to come up with millions of dollars for its contribution to have lake clarity return to a depth of 100 feet.

- Extended the moratorium on medicinal marijuana dispensaries to Nov. 17, 2010, to make it a full year with keeping the number of such businesses at three. This gives the city time to craft an ordinance regulating the pot clubs.
- Gave staff direction to come up with a green building ordinance. This should be before the council in the spring. The council favors developers be allowed to build green on a voluntary basis.
- The city's grievance policy will be discussed in late winter when outside officials are able to be in attendance.
- The next regular council meeting will be Jan. 12 at 9am.

Record crowd at Holiday on Ice show

The Tahoe Figure Skating Clubâ€™s annual Holiday on Ice show has become a yearly favorite with local families as well as visitors to the Tahoe area. This year, the tradition continued with record-breaking attendance this past Saturday evening.

The Figure Skating Club opened the event to all with free admission this year, welcoming donations from the sale of baked goods and a raffle of a donated oil painting to offset the cost of the ice.

Spectators were entertained with skating numbers by 16 local skaters of different skill levels, a few skate school

students, and the Mitey Mites Hockey team.

Skater Deirdre Feagre played the keyboard and sang during intermission. Santa and Mrs. Claus joined the skaters on the ice for the finale.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

Switchback PR + Marketing will donate $4,500 to Tahoe Women's Services and the Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe Community Projects Reaping from the successful summer Downtown Truckee Wine, Walk & Shop.

South Lake Tahoe Boys & Girls Club Christmas Tree Fund Raiser is Dec. 10, 4-7pm at the Optimist's lot.

Sierra and Troy Jacob recently opened the upscale Sierra Bella Salon in Incline Village. Call for details – (775) 832.7777 or go to www.sierrabellasalon.com.

South Lake Tahoe's Explore Tahoe in the Heavenly Village presents "In the Meadow" Dec. 10 at 6pm.

Bob Jasper, former assistant manager for Washoe County, is now manager of Summit County in Colorado.

Holiday Extravaganza at MontBleu Showroom is Dec. 15-16 at 7pm. Tickets are $8 for adults and $5 for students and seniors, 5 and under free. Tickets are available at the door.

Fake ski instructors arrested at Heavenly

Four people were caught trying to make a buck as would-be ski-snowboard instructors at Heavenly Mountain Resort.

The two from South Lake Tahoe, one from Carson City and the other from Albany were charged with misdemeanor crimes and released on promise to appear citations.

El Dorado County sheriff’s deputies set up the sting Dec. 4.

A business license is necessary to conduct such a business and none of these suspects had one, nor did they have permission from Heavenly to offer ski instructor services.

“Operations such as this are sometimes necessary to ensure public safety and local business security,” a press release states. “El Dorado County Sheriffâ€™s Office will continue to monitor Internet and other media sources to ensure our locals and visitors that vendors are operating with the law.”

TOCCATA in concert in Tahoe

The Orchestra and Community Choral Artists of the Tahoe Area presents a concert series featuring the TOCCATA Chamber Orchestra and Chorus with violin soloists Ruth Lenz and Andrew Sords playing concertos of Bach and Vivaldi. Tahoe performances are Jan. 16 at 7:30pm at CalNeva Resort in Crystal Bay (dinner packages available); Jan. 17 at 3pm at St. Theresaâ€™s Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe; and Jan. 18 at 3pm in the Squaw Valley Chapel. www.toccatatahoe.com

Barton’s special events

Dec. 9 â€“ Valley â€œTree of Remembranceâ€ an interfaith ceremony at Methodist Church in Gardnerville from 6:30 to 7:30pm at 1375 Centerville Lane. Greetings, social time and refreshments will follow. Honor someoneâ€™s memory and have a candle lit in their honor at either of the ceremonies. 530-543-5614. Those who donate $50 or more will receive a porcelain keepsake ornament to commemorate the occasion.

Dec. 11- South Lake Tahoe â€œTree of Remembrance,â€ an interfaith ceremony, at St. Theresaâ€™s Catholic Church from 6:30 to 7:30pm St. Theresaâ€™s is at 1041 Lyons Ave., South Lake Tahoe. Greetings, social time and refreshments follow. Honor someoneâ€™s memory and have a candle lit in their honor at either of the ceremonies. Donations to Barton Hospice are accepted but not necessary. Those who donate $50 or more will receive a porcelain keepsake ornament to commemorate the occasion. 530-543-5614.

Dec. 17 – H1N1 (swine) Flu Vaccine for everyone! 4 to 7 p.m. Lake Tahoe Community College. Free, sponsored by Barton Health, LTUSD and El Dorado County Public Health. (Ages 2 and older.) www.bartonhealth.org/flu

Tahoe Adventure Film Festival

Dec. 12



Todd Offenbacher is ready to rock the house Dec. 12 with the annual Tahoe Adventure Film Festival at MontBleu in Stateline. For all the details, click here.

LTCC fire cadets



Photo/Provided

Twenty-eight cadets have completed their first quarter in the fire academy at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe. They are all on target to graduate in June.