May: get every person on the city's payroll to learn how to write grants

Publisher's note: ***Lake Tahoe News is profiling candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council and Douglas County Commission. The stories are being published in the order they were received.***

Name: Géorg M. May

Age: 48

How long have you lived in South Lake Tahoe?: Four years.

One question that bothers the hell out of me is, "how long have you lived in SLT?" Sure, one should have lived here a bit to know what is going on in local politics and observe what public views are prevalent. However, as always facts and views may be interpreted in many ways. Relationships and time tend to create biases. Research has been done by this candidate as per public sentiment. I believe my not being in the political field before is a positive thing. I have observed in SLT as what could be interpreted as an interlocking political system. It is human nature to sometimes be skeptical of change but time does not stand still and nor will I as your representative. Innovative ideas are needed in our ever-changing world if we want to prosper. I plan on building positive relationships with our state and federal representatives. I heard a comment at one council meeting where a member stated "well that would have to go to Sacramento" who cares, sometimes if you don't stand up you will not be seen or heard. I also think it is a great idea to team with other cities so that our superiors in the government chain of command will pay stronger attention to our ideas and suggestions. I have working experience with local governments

as well the U.S. Senate (through private matters) as well as the required tenacity to get our mutual goals accomplished.

Job/profession:

I used to work in recreation management. I'm a published author and I have returned to school in order to change careers. I am currently a student at Lake Tahoe Community College. A city can easily be a full-time job if it is taken seriously and time is devoted to research and planning. I'm willing to put in the effort necessary when elected.

What would you build or tear down on the South Shore to make it great, as in what Whistler is like?:

The hole in the ground where the civic center should be is a new opportunity. Here are just a few options we might build that could combine parts of the following: We could incorporate a new city hall into its architecture. A world-class sports training center and racket club. An I-max theater and a kids science and learning center would be a big draw. Affordable housing mixed with condos and shops, would mix. We need plenty of parking spaces. An area allotted to contain a base for our new light rail transportation center. The options are endless as we move forward. Please email me your ideas to SLTCC@yahoo.com. We will find funding. The sustainability plan at Whistler is recognized as a worldwide model. Let's keep working to become similar.



Georg May

What form of recreation do you participate in? What recreation improvements would you strive to make in SLT?:

I learned to snowboard when I moved here and I am addicted. I ride an old racing bicycle and swim in the lake. I played Jr. B and semi-pro hockey and I plan to get back on the ice as soon as time allows; it's been a long time.

I would rate Gary Moore, the director of Parks and Recreation and his staff, as some of the best in their field I have ever seen. Did you know about the self-efficient power facility they are going to build for the ice arena. It is going to use the heat from the pool's water and use turbines to convert the power to completely fuel the ice rink. The council should continue to listen to his plans and goals. I do know from attending a recent Parks and Recreation Commission meeting that an idea was given to use a chain gang to help pick up garbage on the beaches. This would save that department some negative cash flow. I believe in any new programs we can develop for the disabled and available sponsorships for the less fortunate.

Recreation tourism is expected to be the driving force of the South Shore economy in the coming years, and according to a decade-old study, the majority of the South Lake Tahoe residents would like to see cycling-type facilities and maintenance projects. So, what do you specifically plan to do to improve our substandard, dangerous bike paths and lanes and roads beyond hiring a consultant to tell us how bad they are?:

Let's put a cycling center in the above proposed building.

We don't need a consultant. We need to ensure Caltrans repairs Highway 50 with the most technologically advanced compounds for our seasonal environment. I believe the bike trail is being repaired and expanded with a rubber composite compound, using partial financing from federal and state funds. If I remember correctly, maintenance costs for the trails and safe

school walkways is a problem. Maybe we could use a small city fee added in to our growing biking events to help subsidize these costs.

What are the three major issues facing South Lake Tahoe and how do you expect in four years to make it so they are not major issues when your tenure is through?:

Economy: One goal is to get every person we can on the city's payroll to learn how to write requests for grant money for their department. Also, we need to further our economic development division to recruit new businesses and provide more available resources to current small business owners in regards to available educational and financial resources.

South Lake Tahoe could use the "critical mass" or "gang" philosophy, to initiate neighboring cities into a "clan" that is large enough to make Sacramento and Washington, D.C., listen to our ideas and requests for dollars.

Increased tourism:

Sustainability: Humans are an odd sort. We sometimes don't plan for the future. The current City Council has responsibly thought ahead as to this subject. As taken from the city's 2010-11 budget on their website we need to … create a healthy and sustainable community for current and future South Lake Tahoe residents and visitors.

Priorities are:

Green Infrastructure

Education

Equity and Community Facilities

Healthy Local Food System

Vibrant Local and Regional Economy

What compelling idea have you read in the citizens' input of the revamped, in-progress update of the city's General Plan?:

In an email I just received from city of South Lake Tahoe Assistant Planner Judy Finn, she wrote, "The EIR for the General Plan went out for public review and comment on September 13. To date no comments have been received on the EIR. There is a place for citizens to post public comments. At the end of the review period, November 12, a summary of those comments will be posted."

However, I did find an old letter from former City Manager David Jenkins on which I will comment. In one paragraph he observantly states, "I know too that that are prominent people in the community who do not want to see quality workforce housing built anywhere near them or built at all. They are good people who are vocal and powerful and have a perspective on the world and our community. Some of them live close to the Barbara Avenue site and for unexplained reasons simply oppose housing near them. This opposition is not uncommon in California but it is opposition that we must resist for us to meet our broader obligations to the entire community and our mission to overcome barriers to the delivery of workforce housing."

I believe this is another example of the economic elite discriminating against those trying to move up in the world and are in many ways the backbone of our community.

How do you plan to boost revenue in SLT?:

Grants! Using grants and Obama's stimulus package as well as Obama's small business package that was just approved on the 13th we can generate green jobs and scientific centers as proposed by the Lake Tahoe Basin Prosperity Plan.

What stands out to you in the 2010-11 budget?:

This quote was taken right from the city's website, "Fixed

expenses continue to grow faster than revenues!” = Lots of work ahead for the new City Council. If we coordinate an advertising campaign that includes the Lake Tahoe Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, the city of Stateline, Reno, North Lake Tahoe, the ski resorts, and every other entity willing to work together, we could put together marketing strategy to bring us the world.

What needs to be done to allow businesses to thrive in SLT?:

Increase traffic.

What have you done to help South Lake Tahoe be a better community?:

I am currently working on a project to enlighten some local institutions in regards to disability discrimination. It’s time we acknowledge and put some energy toward examining society’s attitudes, structures and policies of stigmatizing the disabled. This is a form of discrimination as outlined by the American with Disabilities Act. Let’s educate ourselves to combat biases focused against those suffering from mental disorders and addictions.I have also done some volunteer work for the League to Save Lake Tahoe.

What boards, commissions, or other experience do you have?:

My ever-continuing education builds from living in the four corners of the U.S. as well as the Midwest. I have a business management background in college and university as well as recreation management at the University of Illinois. I have also attended flight school in San Diego. I have worked involving recreation programs for the developmentally disabled, children’s programs and the elderly. I have specialized experience creating programs to help those stricken with Alzheimer’s. I have supervised an ice arena in Missouri and managed a roller rink in Washington. I wrote a proposal for a budget for the University of Illinois ice arena for one year, and decreased expenses by 15 percent. I was a

supervisor at the Space Needle Restaurant in Seattle. More budgetary experience includes restaurants and small business. I now plan to get a degree in law, my practice will split emphasis between civil law and new media.

My life experiences have taught me that we as a society may find we have more in common in this growingly diverse world than we may think. Fallacious arguments such as I have witnessed at many City Council meetings around the United States and here have created unproductive politics. Reasonable approaches and understandings of all points of views will help the council to study and debate items in a professional, fair and balanced manner.

Why should voters vote for you over someone else?:

Put your vote where the grand jury's report is.

I am not your average interlocked politician that I believe this city has observed in the past and has the unfortunate opportunity to see in the future. You will not see ties on my neck or ties to special interest organizations, real estate endeavors or nepotistic relationships. The political and financial elite stay in power using this interlocked system thereby generating a system where closed sessions and surprise sessions may be used to support personal agendas and to remain in power. I hope to break this barrier with the educated public's help.

BlueGo, the public transit, is mired in lawsuits and bankruptcy. Do we need public transit on the South Shore? If so, how do you propose to make it functional?:

Of course we need public transportation, not only for our underpaid workers, but for the tourists that don't want to rent a car, and of course, for environmental reasons. I want to get SLT working on a transit plan for the future, possibly using light rail technology. For now we might want to incorporate a shuttle system comparable to Whistler where with

a permanent population around 10K they have ridership around 2.5 million a year. I wonder how many public officials have used our public transportation system except on informational tours? More important, I wonder how many of our public officials have had to wait for a bus in the rain and snow? Buses in the past have been known to skip part of a route to make up for time. Workers have been late to their jobs and students have missed entire classes because of BlueGo's poor performance. We have to stay in touch with the people. Let's take some responsibility to ensure all city services are implemented properly. Let's take responsibility to see that services that are not in control of the city are done properly. We need to know what is going on by physically researching some issues. Yes, this strategy takes time and commitment. It is worth the effort. Someone has to do it. Let's take control. By having control of what's going on in our community, we need to use a system of checks and balances as drawn out in our constitution. After all, we are not the TRPA. We cannot rely on someone else to look after our own wellbeing.

Do you support commercial air service at Lake Tahoe Airport? Why or why not?:

Having gone through flight school for a private pilot license, I easily recognize what an asset a fully operational airport can bring to a destination community. Using the noise monitoring equipment already in place there are – four in the city and two in the county. There are established noise abatement thresholds established by the FAA; there is no plausable reason in my mind not to increase our accessibility for tourism through this mode of transportation.

Is there any individual, group or organization you would not take campaign money from? Why?:

I have not, nor expect to get any donations from anyone.

However, if offered, I will follow the campaign laws and my self-imposed moral obligations as to any political contributions.

California law states: Per Ca code:89510. (a) A candidate for elective state office may only accept contributions within the limits provided in Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 85100). (b) All contributions deposited into the campaign account shall be deemed to be held in trust for expenses associated with the election of the candidate or for expenses associated with holding office. (2) For purposes of this chapter, “committee” means a controlled committee, ballot measure committee, committee opposed to a candidate or measure, and any committee which qualifies as a committee pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 82013. 89511. (3) For purposes of this chapter, “substantial personal benefit” means an expenditure of campaign funds which results in a direct personal benefit with a value of more than two hundred dollars ($200) to a candidate, elected officer, or any individual or individual with authority to approve the expenditure of campaign funds held by a committee.

Nepotism and favoritism runs rampant in the city when it comes to hiring preferences. The council sets policy. What type of policy would you write regarding nepotism and favoritism?:

No nepotism or favoritism allowed. This rule shall be strictly enforced and should be double-checked by an unbiased party and shall be punishable by termination.

Tell us something about yourself that voters don’t already know:

I have experience in court representing myself (pro se) against two major corporations and I won and settled these cases. I know how to research city codes, California codes of law as well as case law. I will apply and expand my legal knowledge in order to further the accomplishment of a common

goal to better our city.

This opportunity sounds like a full-time job to me, it is. I am a realist that does not expect all positive outcomes. However, I do expect this town to move forward and not backward.

Wet weather in Tahoe-Reno not going anywhere

By Steve Timko, Reno Gazette-Journal

Only five days into October and, unofficially, it’s the sixth wettest October on record for Reno, the National Weather Service reported.

There’s a chance Thursday another storm will hit the area with intensity close to the one that dropped 1.09 inches of rain on Monday night and Tuesday morning, said Alex Hoon, weather service lead forecaster.

The highest passes in the area – the Mount Rose Highway, Carson Pass, Monitor Pass and Ebbetts Pass – got snow Monday night and Tuesday morning and had either snow tire requirements or were temporarily closed.

Hoon said rain and snow from Thursday’s storm will likely fall more to the north of Reno, where the passes will be below the snow level.

Read the whole story

Chamber to spearhead South Lake's business program

By Joann Eisenbrandt

Local businesses have felt the brunt of the economic downturn in a town where survival is difficult even in the best of times. On Oct. 5 the City Council approved a contract with the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce to provide business coaching to low-income local businesses to help them survive. The $100,000 contract is funded by California CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds.

Councilman Bill Crawford pulled the item for discussion, citing a conflict between this agreement and another agenda item, results from the South Tahoe Redevelopment Agency Project Area No. 2 Survey (Tahoe Valley/Y area). "In the Item No. 17 Redevelopment Survey," Crawford stated, "business people said mentoring services were not important to them. Why would we want to give $100,000 to anyone if those taking part in the survey said they didn't want those services?" A summary of the survey results lists "Business Coaching and Mentoring Services" under "Not Important."

Crawford also cited a potential conflict of interest on the part of Nancy Kerry, the city's redevelopment/housing/economic development manager and a former chamber employee, who oversaw the RFP process. "As soon as I saw the chamber had responded to the RFP, I changed the review process. I wanted to avoid even the appearance of a conflict," Kerry said. She withdrew from review of the proposals; the chamber ultimately scored

the highest.

Kerry told Lake Tahoe News that outreach to businesses has been an important part of the city's economic development efforts for some time. The city recently re-branded its program as Business TIES (Tahoe Investors and Entrepreneur Coaches), which has brought increased interest in these services from the local business community. The city had been contracting with Golden Capital from Chico to provide these services.

The chamber will provide coaching by nine business professionals from varied backgrounds. Assistance is available only to low-income businesses that will contact the city to be qualified and then referred to the appropriate coach or coaches depending on their specific needs. Payment will not go to the chamber, but to the individual team members who do the mentoring.

Five of the nine local "coaches" spoke in support of the program and the benefits their years of experience and expertise could provide struggling businesses.

"I can apply what I've learned in 40 years of marketing," said Jim Barr of JFB Creative Services. "It's about helping local businesses. I want to be sure the restaurant that I visited last week will still be there the next time."

Some who spoke to the issue weren't convinced. Danny Freemon criticized the city for "leaving the Y area hanging out to dry," with projects there left "floundering."

"I don't think sending money across the state line (chamber offices are located in Nevada) is a good idea," Freemon said. He is also active in the California-based chamber.

How city money should be spent, who or what it gets spent on, and who should be involved in the decision-making process is not a new issue. In response to Crawford's question, "Who are

these local pros?” doing the coaching, Mayor Kathay Lovell responded the city had been strongly criticized in the past for reaching outside the basin for contractors and consultants, but this time was adding local talent to “the city’s toolbox.”

Crawford also questioned why the chamber had been unable to educate its 750-plus members in basic business survival techniques. B Gorman, president and CEO of the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, responded, “I won’t pretend this will be easy. Business owners are busy. It’s a challenge we face on a daily basis. People need help. They just don’t know they need it.”

Gorman told LTN the program will begin outreach immediately, but will remain a work in progress. “The parameters of the grant are for business coaching, but how each business gets that help will be based on their needs, whether it’s negotiating a lease, bookkeeping, developing a business or marketing plan, or confronting an Americans with Disabilities Act lawsuit. There are multiple layers to this program. Coaches may come back with new trends that need to be addressed. Things change. Two years ago no one was talking about ADA compliance.”

The council approved the contract, with Crawford voting no.

In other action, the council:

• Approved a resolution in support of Proposition 22, the Local Taxpayer, Public Safety and Transportation Act of 2010. Proposition 22 is an Initiative Constitutional Amendment which would prohibit the state from borrowing or taking funds used for transportation, redevelopment or local government projects and services.

• Solicited Applications for Appointment to the Airport Commission, Building Board of Appeals Commission, Delinquent Refuse Fees Hearing Board, General Plan Advisory Commission,

Latino Affairs Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission and Sustainability Commission.

• Accepted Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality and Regional Surface Transportation Program funding for the Pioneer Trail Pedestrian Upgrades Project ($837,438). Money will be used for sidewalks and lighting in the heavily traveled area of Pioneer between Highway 50 and Larch Avenue.

• Extended the Transit Center Lease between the city and Heavenly for until October 2015.

• Recognized the month of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

• Presented a proclamation recognizing the retirement of Gary Moore, director of Parks and Recreation following 36 years with the city.

• Received a report from Barbara Ferry, Census 2010 Partnership Specialist for the city. Ferry told the Council that Census figures for the city will be available in March 2011.

Curry: grow, strengthen and diversify the local economy

Publisher's note: ***Lake Tahoe News is profiling candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council and Douglas County Commission. The stories are being published in the order they were received.***

Name: Joy Curry

Age: 63

How long have you lived in South Lake Tahoe?: I made South Lake Tahoe my home in 2003, after frequently enjoying visiting and vacationing in the area since 1979.

Job/profession: South Lake Tahoe planning commissioner, small business owner, community college instructor, dental practice management, community volunteer.



Joy Curry

What would you build or tear down on the South Shore to make it great, as in what Whistler is like?

We need to be South Lake Tahoe and not try to emulate other resort towns. Whistler, Park City, Vail and other resort towns have some of the natural attractions of South Shore, but none have the unique combination of the lake, mountains and forests. We can take ideas and successes from other resort towns and utilize them in South Shore. Our downtown is Highway 50, which is unlike any other resort town. I would like to see a community center and city hall evolve around Lakeview Commons to give the South Shore a sense of community. In the Regional Plan and General Plan Update, the community said over and over again that they wanted common gathering places and Lakeview Commons is a perfect setting to develop those ideas. We need to implement the Tahoe Valley Community Plan and update the Y. Create more pocket parks for our community. We need to create a world-class resort destination at Stateline to improve our economy, which in turn will vitalize small

business, create jobs and provide our residents with wages that enable affordable living within the city.

What form of recreation do you participate in? What recreation improvements would you strive to make in SLT?

I love the Tahoe lifestyle. In the summer you can find me hiking, kayaking, boating, bicycling, playing golf, and just enjoying the beach and the beautiful outdoors. In the winter I ski and snowshoe. I would like to improve and maintain walking and bike paths, ball fields and community parks.

Recreation tourism is expected to be the driving force of the South Shore economy in the coming years, and according to a decade-old study, the majority of the South Lake Tahoe residents would like to see cycling-type facilities and maintenance projects. So, what do you specifically plan to do to improve our substandard, dangerous bike paths and lanes and roads beyond hiring a consultant to tell us how bad they are?:

The poor condition of our streets, bike trails and drainage systems are well documented. I am told that the cost to build and repair streets and drainage alone is over $100 million. The city needs to continue seeking federal and state grants funds to make these repairs and improvements over time to reduce the burden on local taxpayers. The city needs to continue to vigorously oppose any state take-away of city funds for street repair, etc. Whenever and wherever eligible, the city needs to use available RDA funds in both existing and new RDA project areas to make major roadway repairs. Aggressively apply for grants and partner with other agencies. Support another attempt to pass a measure complementing Measure S for ball fields and repair of bike paths. A stronger and more diverse local economy will help generate new funds that can be dedicated for road repairs.

What are the three major issues facing South Lake Tahoe and how do you expect in four years to make it so they are not

major issues when your tenure is through?

First, grow, strengthen and diversify the local economy. Complete and adopt a business-friendly and business-encouraging city General Plan and Tahoe Valley Community Plan and vigorously support development of a business-friendly TRPA Regional Plan. Second, invest new dollars from a growing economy that provides the revenue base to make needed capital improvements in the community (streets, drainage, sidewalks where desired and lighting). Third, encourage current local businesses and new companies to establish desired products and services that are appreciated and supported by locals and tourists alike. In support of each of these, I will encourage, support, and seek to facilitate completion of the convention center/hotel project.

What compelling idea have you read in the citizens' input of the revamped, in-progress update of the city's General Plan?

As I have advocated on the city Planning Commission regarding this and other important planning issues that come to the table, we must have public outreach meetings, dialogue, and more community input on the proposed General Plan and Tahoe Valley Community Plan before final approval is made by the City Council. We are at an important juncture with these plans that will establish our city's future. We must exercise due diligence to gather information, get input and deliberate effectively to get it right the first time. I would also evaluate the final plan options to be presented to the City Council to see how they match up against the public opinion poll of local residents done by the city in December 2008 regarding city needs and priorities. I will carefully evaluate resident comments on any new plan and weigh this together with other factors including funds available, costs, outcomes and technical input. We must have good plans that the community wants and supports if we are to prosper in the future.

How do you plan to boost revenue in SLT?

Recreation tourism is the backbone of our community, and it is the City Council's duty to grow, strengthen, and diversify our local economy. Re-establishing commercial air service to Lake Tahoe Airport would be a great boost to our overall economy. Support a more business-friendly business regulatory system that is also environmentally friendly. Support continued and expanded business retention, expansion and new business development programs by the city's RDA. Continue city collaboration and support of the Lake Tahoe Basin Prosperity Plan and support activities of it that will help to grow the local economy. Review consolidation opportunities and seek grants that may have potential for new resources of funding. Particularly those related to sustainability. Collaboration with others agencies, school district, STPUD, and with them we might be able to consolidate or combine resources to save money. Turn over every rock to reduce cost and increase revenue while still providing critical essential services to the community. Police, fire, snow removal are critical.

What stands out to you in the 2010-11 budgets?

The city budget is lean and tight because local government revenues are down due to a sluggish national, state and regional economy. The state confiscated $2 million in RDA funds from the city. The city has made cutbacks in employees but assures us that a high level of public services will continue to be provided. The budget is protected by a strong reserve (unlike the state of California) that can help pay for emergencies that may arise. Employee groups have made concessions with furloughs, accepting salary reductions, paying part of their retirement contributions and giving back COLAs to help maintain needed services to the community. Growing the local economy needs to be the focus of city government or the city will be unable to sustain over time providing a high level of service to the community. We need to always look at ways to do more than less.

What needs to be done to allow businesses to thrive in SLT?

Take back more regulatory control of business from TRPA and give it to city elected officials. It is then incumbent upon these elected officials to fashion more business-friendly environment to include business expansion, new business development and business beautification and appearance enhancements, e.g. responsible rules for signage and property attractiveness.

What have you done to help South Lake Tahoe be a better community?

I have donated my time and service to the city as a member of the City Planning Commission for the last 3½ years. I am also a member of the General Plan Update Committee, which has worked on the General Plan and held many public meetings for input from the community. I served on the Public Working Group for the Regional Plan Update. This committee met over a two-year period, with many open meetings to allow full public input for the Regional Plan. I have hundreds of hours invested in participation in these working groups to expand my knowledge and ability to lead our city and move us forward.

What boards, commissions, or other experience do you have?

I am currently the vice chair of the South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission, having served on the commission for 3½ years. I serve on the General Plan Update for the city. I have served on the Public Working Group for Pathways, which is managed by TRPA. Before residing in SLT, my experience also includes being a Schoolpower board member, Capital Campaign for the Laguna Beach Unified School District, a member of the Sandpiper Board, Hoag Hospital Foundation Board and involved in the Capital Campaign for the Hoag Cancer Center.

Why should voters vote for you over someone else?

I want to move us forward by being dedicated as a city councilmember and serving with a full-time commitment. I have experience running a business in town and know the struggles

faced by local business owners. I will make a positive impact on the community by focusing on the real issues of interest to the people, combined with a process that allows civil and courteous discourse on local government issues at the City Council and in the community. I am my own person. I am not beholden to special interests. I want what is best for the entire community. I am dedicated to that end and move us forward.

Blue Go, the public transit, is mired in lawsuits and bankruptcy. Do we need public transit on the South Shore? If so, how do you propose to make it functional?

We need a fully functional and efficient transportation system in South Shore. Having both public and private sector involvement and financing of a transit system is a good thing. The public should not have to bear the full cost of a viable public transit. The current organizational structure of transportation in the South Shore needs to be re-examined and restructured, with competent and efficient operators brought in to run a system that serves the community, meaning affordable and reliable.

Do you support commercial air service at Lake Tahoe Airport? Why or why not?

Yes. I'm in favor of re-establishing commercial air service to the Lake Tahoe Airport, which would be a big boost to small businesses and the overall local economy. The airport is not only important economically, but vital to the public's protection in case of a catastrophic wildfire. Commercial air service would facilitate easy, quick access to South Shore that would benefit tourism. The reality is that South Lake Tahoe isn't a convenient destination. Opening the airport to commercial traffic – as it was years ago—would facilitate arrival at South Shore within an hour from points on the West Coast and within several hours from any point in the country

Is there any individual, group or organization you would not take campaign money from? Why?

I welcome the support of community members and legitimate interests in my campaign. However, no one should think that by contributing to my campaign that they will gain special favors from me. I will always vote favorably on matters before the City Council that I think best serve all the people of South Lake Tahoe.

Nepotism and favoritism runs rampant in the city when it comes to hiring preferences. The council sets policy. What type of policy would you write regarding nepotism and favoritism?

People hired by the city should be hired on the basis of their qualifications, experience and what they know, not who they know. The city has an anti-nepotism policy in place, and no one has found that it has been violated. All hiring, purchasing and contracting policies and practices for the city should be based upon a level playing field that provides fairness, objectivity, transparency and cost-effectiveness in all city dealings and transactions. I will support and encourage a complete review by the City Council of the current policy and practices, taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure strict compliance policies and procedures that accomplish these ethical and operational standards.

You and three other council candidates met with the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce. Then you and two others were invited back for a follow-up meeting. Tell us about that meeting.

I spoke to a small group of business leaders and would be happy to speak to any group that invites me to speak. The follow up meeting provided educational information about running for office that was helpful.

Tell us something about yourself that voters don’t already know:

I am a go-getter. I am a mom and wife first and have always taken very good care of my family, and I pledge to do the same for the city of South Lake Tahoe.

South Shore highways to be a mess in 2011

By Kathryn Reed

Improvements to Highway 89 (aka Luther Pass) won't be done this building season as planned, and will instead require two months of work in 2011.

However, with Echo Summit slated to be closed part of the spring while the retaining wall is overhauled, officials aren't sure when the work on Highway 89 will be done because that is one of the alternate routes for Highway 50.



Improvements to Highway 89 in Meyers will be done in 2011. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Replacing the rock wall on Highway 50 coming into the Lake Tahoe Basin has been on the books for a while. With a coordinated effort under way to ensure traffic still flows into the South Shore, Caltrans officials don't want to impede that process with delays on another highway.

Echo Summit will be closed for 14 days. This will be in May 2011, unless work can start earlier. It will be followed by 20-30 days of controlled traffic except for Friday afternoons when it will be open in both directions. It will be wide-open Memorial Day weekend, too.

Click on Echo FAQ for some answers to the project provided by Caltrans.

The Highway 89 project is a water quality project – meaning shoring up erosion concerns, putting in curbs and gutters.

The 2.2 miles of roadway on 89 from the junction of 50 will have a 4-foot shoulder for cyclists. Beyond that road bike riders are still in for a bit of a harrowing experience being so close to vehicles.

Mike Cook, Caltrans project manager for the basin, said intentions are the asphalt will be smooth to the curb and gutter so the surface is safe for cyclists.

All the grates are designed to be bicycle proof, meaning a front wheel won't get lodged in it and send the rider flying over the handlebars.

At this point it's anyone's guess how all the roadwork is factoring into Amgen's decision to bring the Tour of California bike ride to Tahoe. That decision is expected any day.

DMV furlough days create lines, not savings in Nev.

By David McGrath Schwartz, Las Vegas Sun

For the impatient motorists waiting in those long lines at the DMV, it might be easy to believe the situation is the inevitable result of the state's fiscal crisis and budget cuts.

But no. Instead, it's a by-product of furloughs of state workers elsewhere in the Nevada government and what some might say is a misguided sense of fairness. Department of Motor Vehicles workers, as well as those processing unemployment claims and welfare, have gotten dragged into furloughs in the name of equity, lawmakers say.

Forcing state DMV workers to take off one day a month – and creating longer lines in the process – does nothing to remedy the state's general fund budget deficit.

But it has forced Nevadans to spend drastically more time tapping their toes in line. In the two years state workers have been forced to take furloughs, average wait times at DMV offices have increased by as much as 67 percent.

Read the whole story

Lakeview Commons future may

fall to new council

By Jeremy Evans

The South Lake Tahoe City Council met in closed session Tuesday, a day after El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Steve Bailey ruled the city needs to start the bid process over for the Lakeview Commons project.

Nothing earth-shattering resulted from the meeting as the city is still mulling its options. One option is to appeal the judge's ruling. Another option, the more likely of the two, essentially restarts the bid process and opens it back up to all contractors.

Once the judge signs the written ruling – Monday's ruling was oral – the city would have 30 days to appeal the judge's decision. The written ruling should be received within the next week.



Lakeview Commons is still on hold. Photo/Kathryn Reed

"As far as I know, there was no decision about what the city is going to do with Lakeview Commons," said Councilman Bill Crawford. "It was a closed session and I can't talk openly about what was discussed."

If the city doesn’t appeal the judge’s ruling and waits the entire 30 days, it could be January before another bid is awarded. Once the 30-day appeal period has passed, it would take roughly 60 days for a new contractor to be awarded the bid – 30 days for the city to accept bids and then 30 days to review them before awarding a bid. That means the new City Council, which will be formed in November’s election with three open seats available, will likely handle the future of Lakeview Commons.

“The judge ruled exactly like I had thought he would,” said Councilman Jerry Birdwell. “It wouldn’t have been fair to make the city accept another bid. But the new council needs to be in charge of this as this council has had two failed attempts with this project. This council has had its chances.” (Birdwell will be leaving the council after the election.)

The city discovered last month it was operating under an invalid contract with Reeve Knight, the contractor that was awarded the bid on Aug. 3 and broke ground a day later. Clark & Sullivan, a competing firm that challenged the awarding of the $4.5 million bid, brought the case to court after excavating had begun.

Judge Bailey issued an injunction on Aug. 30 that halted construction, and then ruled in mid-September that the contract was void and invalid. With Monday’s ruling, it was assured there won’t be any improvements to the El Dorado Beach area until next spring. Proper winterizing of the property will take place this month.

Bailey could have ruled the city had to award the bid to Clark & Sullivan, which believed the bid process was invalid. It was believed all along, however, that the judge would simply return the contractual mess back to the city, allowing it to start over and ensure the process be completed correctly.

TTD to keep BlueGo buses rolling on the South Shore

By Joann Eisenbrandt

The wheels on BlueGo buses have been going round and round for years, but they have not been able to get riders to their destinations efficiently, reliably and affordably. The City Council is hoping its unanimous approval of an interim funding and service agreement between the city and the Tahoe Transportation District on Oct. 5 to manage the coordinated transit system most recently run by South Tahoe Area Transit Authority will be a positive new step.



TTD was created under Article IX of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Compact. Its board includes representatives from the public and private sectors. TTD is responsible for implementing transportation plans and projects, and can own and operate transportation systems and/or facilities. Under the contract approved Tuesday, it will be the governing body of BlueGo, responsible for its day-to-day management.

A South Shore Transit History

Bus service the on South Shore has a long, but not always successful history. In 1985, local Ken Daley formed ATM (Area Transit Management) and began running STAGE (South Tahoe Area Ground Express), the predecessor to BlueGo. Daley sold ATM in 2006. Operational and financial problems followed under the new ownership. In late 2008, ATM abruptly stopped service, leaving the buses and bus barns in disrepair.

STATA, a nonprofit Nevada umbrella agency, was formed to create a coordinated public/private transit management entity. Funding for STATA came from grants, state and federal governments and money from the member partners, which included the South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County, Douglas County, TRPA (non-voting), TTD, Ridge Resorts, Harrah's, Harvey's, Lakeside Inn, MontBleu, Horizon and Heavenly Mountain Resort.

STATA contracted with MV Transportation to run the transit service, which included BlueGo, Nifty 50 Trolley, Heavenly ski shuttles, and routes to Carson City and the Carson Valley. MV faced financial challenges from the outset. Cleaning up the problems left by ATM was expensive. STATA worked on a cash-in cash-out basis. From the start, more cash was going out than coming in. Service reductions and bus route manipulation didn't solve the problem. In May 2010, MV threatened to walk away if it didn't get the more than $2 million it contended STATA owed it. In late May, STATA terminated MV's contract.

STATA then contracted with TRC Consultants, a firm it had used earlier to assess the system and make recommendations on cost savings. MV Transportation filed lawsuits against TRC, STATA and its individual members. STATA's assets were frozen; the lawsuits remain unresolved and mediation has so far been unsuccessful.

STATA subsequently made route and service changes, eliminating Meyers Route 40 and Zephyr Cove Route 22 and enhancing Highway 50 service from 60-minute to 30-minute intervals to fill in the gaps.

In late June, El Dorado County pulled its $181,000 in funds allocated to STATA for fiscal year 2010-11. County concerns focused on liability because they were not on the certificate of insurance, and on STATA's failure to release the 2009 state audit.

In July, STATA brought in TTD to handle the day-to-day transit

operations through Sept. 30, 2010. TRC retained its earlier contract to actually run the buses. Rumors about STATA filing for bankruptcy had been swirling for some time, but had been consistently denied. State and federal agencies had become nervous about their precarious financial situation, with the Nevada Department of Transportation threatening to pull their funding because of the instability. On Aug. 13, 2010, the STATA board voted to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in Nevada.

At its Sept. 10 meeting, the STATA board approved more route changes, including the elimination of Routes 52, 54 and 55. These changes became effective Oct. 3.

Handoff to TTD

The transit hot potato is now in TTD's hands. The money the city will use to fund the agreement come from the state under the Transportation Development Act (TDA), one of the main sources of public transit funding in California. No general fund monies will be used.

TTD also signed a lease agreement for use of the South Tahoe transit facilities, including the bus garage on Shop Street and the South Y Transit Station on Emerald Bay Road at $3,000/month, and a license agreement for the Y transit facility, Stateline Transit Center and all bus stop locations in the city.

"Each entity that is a part of STATA is giving TTD their assurance that the funding they provide now to STATA will continue as TTD takes over management of the transit service," said Assistant City Manager Rick Angelocci.

City Attorney Patrick Enright explained to the council that this is a "short-term resolution" to the problem, which will allow time for STATA's future and pending lawsuits to be resolved. The TTD board is expected to approve the agreement next week.

Not everyone thinks this is the best solution. Councilman Bill Crawford told *Lake Tahoe News*, "TRPA is a total failure when it comes to public transportation in the basin. They are supposed to be the planning deity. If we want a regional transportation system in the basin, it should be federally funded, since TRPA was created under a federal charter. It should be TRPA's responsibility."

Crawford added, "STATA had too many players. The city had a reliable bus system that worked years ago. It should run its own system, one with fares that the working class citizens of the community can afford."

When asked by *LTN* why the city doesn't consider running an independent bus system again, Angelocci cited inconsistent funding.

According to Angelocci, STATA designed its routes and services based on the total amount of funding it expected – close to $5 million – when in fact the actual funding received was about $3.6 million.

Tahoe transit's future

As of Sept. 30, most members of STATA had withdrawn their funding from that entity and provided letters approving the takeover of the transit system by TTD. Lakeside Inn, Ridge Resorts, Heavenly and TTD remain part of STATA.

At present, STATA still exists, but should board members choose to file Chapter 7 bankruptcy, the entity will then dissolve and their assets and funds will be distributed according to bankruptcy law.

TTD does not want this management role long-term. An RFP will go out in December. The precise configuration of that RFP, Angelocci explains, will determine "who takes over and does what. TTD could retain part of the responsibility, or none, but this RPF will dictate the future of our transit system."

Accommodation Station sold to Vail Resorts

Publisher's note: ***Greta and Mike Hambsch are selling the 34-year-old property management firm, which is the third largest in the South Lake Tahoe area.***

By Denver Business Journal

Vail Resorts Inc. is getting into the lodging business in South Lake Tahoe.

The Broomfield-based company (NYSE: MTN), which owns four Colorado ski resorts and the Heavenly Mountain Resort in South Lake Tahoe announced Tuesday that it has acquired Accommodation Station, the third-largest property management company in the South Lake Tahoe market. Privately owned Accommodation Station manages condominiums, mountain chalets, cabins and luxury homes for short- and long-term rentals.

Vail Resorts owns or manages slopeside lodging already around its Colorado resorts – Vail, Breckenridge, Keystone and Beaver Creek – and in Jackson Hole, Wyo. But this is the company's first lodging collection in South Lake Tahoe.

Read the whole story

Bonner: continue to build our location as a recreation destination

Publisher's note: ***Lake Tahoe News is profiling candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council and Douglas County Commission. The stories are being published in the order they were received.***

Name: Lee Bonner

Age: 51

Hometown: Minden

How long have you lived here?: 5+ years

Job/profession: Communications, public affairs



Lee Bonner

What would you build or tear down on the South Shore to make it great, as in what Whistler is like?

This is excellent, yet, tough question to answer. First, let me start by saying one person doesn't and shouldn't make a decision like this with no regard for the community or its members. It's a community decision, but one that the county should invest in by the giving of expertise and time.

To begin this discussion, I would gather a group of

stakeholders that consists of gaming, Realtors, business owners, homeowners and other key Tahoe organization representatives to define what the problem areas are. If you are going to do something of this magnitude, you must define the problem you are solving. That's step one. Once the problem has been defined, we begin to look at multiple ways to solve that problem. With a possible outcome culminating with a comprehensive, multi-year approach that addresses the findings of the stakeholders. Each stakeholder will gather input from their group or organization and bring that back to the committee. And a formal plan should emerge that addresses the needs. I believe that we can do this together and come up with the right plan to make this happen. When we all work together the possibilities are endless.

One issue we should address is the stalled convention center project. As we look to a long-term strategy, this should be a part of any lake revitalization plan going forward.

One question back to you: Why be like Whistler when we can be better?

On a personal note: I would love to see us build a north facing outdoor amphitheater that has a north view of the lake, with the sun in the west, it would be a perfect setting to view the lake and watch a concert, play or musical. This would be the premiere outdoor venue for concerts in all of Northern Nevada. I believe Edgewood Companies has a great location for something like this.

What form of recreation do you participate in? What improvements to recreation would you strive to make throughout Douglas County?

Equestrian, skiing, boating, hiking, swimming, fishing, camping, art and concerts.

We need to continue to build our location as a recreation destination and work in combination with other agencies to

market what we have to offer. This also means a continued investment in roads and trails, upon which to travel.

One aspect of the county that I think is not being utilized to the fullest as far as tourism is the great equestrian trails we have. We are doing well in many areas, but we could do more in the area of trails and adding the current trails to the geo-tourism area sponsored by National Geographic. If you would like to be a contributor to this site, I would encourage everyone to participate. We are a part of the Tahoe Emigrant corridor. Click on the Tahoe Emigrant Corridor section, you can enter in your own trails and make this a great guide for locals and tourists alike.

Recreation tourism is expected to be the driving force of the South Shore economy in the coming years, what do you specifically plan to do to improve bike paths and roads?

Roads are a critical part of the county plan. We have to maintain our investment in infrastructure if we want to attract more businesses and tourists. Who wants to drive on an asphalt road that feels like a washboard? While we are in an economic downturn we must maintain key investments in the county or we face a longer hurdle later.

Bike paths are not only a form of recreation, but they are a way to keep our citizens safe and protected from the heavy traffic we experience on the roads. We need to establish a long-term strategy to maintain and expand the existing bike path system we have. When you look at future road improvements we should keep pedestrians and bikes in mind. Currently if you try to bike down the lake side of Kingsbury, there are some safety concerns I have for those on bikes.

Bike paths and trails are also a key part of who we are as a community, but as a horseman, let’s not overlook the horse community. We all work well together and we can all share in the beauty of this area that God created.

How do you plan to boost revenue in Douglas County?

The key answer is jobs … we need jobs and that means we need key businesses large and small to make Douglas County home as well as ensure that existing businesses thrive through our support and efforts. The salary of a person is multiplied five times as money changes hands. From restaurants to grocery shopping to leisure activities and housing. We need jobs from a variety of business types to be sustainable for the next decade. A mix of industries will broaden our portfolio of revenue which will drive sustainability when the economy isn't growing.

With my experience in business process and expertise in collaboration and problem solving, I can bring a skill set to the commission that will help us over the hurdles in the next administration.

When you look at experience, you have to look at what the candidate has done with their experience. I have been committed to the county in many ways in providing leadership and expertise at the nonprofit, county and state level in many different facets from education to economic growth. This experience in working with many organizations across our county and state will only benefit the county with the working relationships I have built.

What stands out for you in the 2010-11 budget?

What stands out to me is that we have had declining revenues for the past four years and while making cuts, over the past four years, we have not done much to create a better business environment.

The county was able to come in with a balanced budget through severe cuts. Everyone pulled together and made the cuts necessary. The economic boom to Douglas County happened over the last 10 years and if we want to make cuts, we should take a look at the programs we have created during those years. As

we list all those programs and we look at declining revenue, we must prioritize what makes sense for us to continue providing.

How do we prioritize these programs? By examining the return on our investment, (ROI) those programs that are working well and are returning the largest numbers and giving us value we expected are the ones we keep. Those programs that are not providing the return we need or what we expected from our programs are cut. We continue to support and fund those programs that are meeting the greatest need. We cut those that drain the budget and do not provide the expected return or services to the community.

However, when the economy spirals, there are some things you can count on. As revenue goes down, church attendance and crime go up. Our sheriff has invested his career to ensure a safe place to live work and play in Douglas County. To that end, we must ensure we don't compromise that basic premise of quality of life to cut a few dollars. Further, current business owners and those considering moving here, look at crime in the top three priorities. Let's not shoot ourselves in the foot … pardon the pun.

What needs to be done to allow businesses to thrive in Douglas County?

First, while we are in a downturn economically, we should be working to streamline the process. If the process is 143 steps, let's make it 43. Second, the county should be surveying the new businesses and as a county let's learn from our current businesses what the pain points are in the process and ask them what they would have changed. Let's also talk to builders and do the same thing with their permitting process. The county has customers in the way of business and her citizens and their voice should be heard and should tell us what the needs are.

Our county has a reputation of not being business friendly and if we are to be successful we must simplify the process and become a bit less cumbersome and more nimble, while always ensuring public safety.

We have had businesses that wanted to come here, but due to issues in working with the county they left and went elsewhere. Word of mouth travels fast and makes its way back to other companies wanting to do the same thing. If we cannot change public perception, we will have a long road to become business friendly.

What are the three major issues facing Douglas County and how to expect in four years to make it so they are not major issues when your tenure is through?

Jobs! Education! Government!

We have lost jobs in the last few years and that along with the economy has caused some local businesses to go under. An influx of jobs into the county will help us have a healthy, vibrant community. This can be done by being more business friendly and streamlining the permitting process for builders and business.

I think we all agree we need jobs and that will help turn the county revenue situation around, but also involved in this process is to look at what the pain points for business are and what the county has done to help or to stifle businesses across the county.

Another focal point in our county should be promoting education. While Douglas County has a good education system, we are in a state that is consistently ranked near the bottom. The state budget doesn’t have the funds to help us in the next few years and in order to attract and retain businesses and employees I would like to see the county make a deeper investment in education. Let’s look at public-private partnerships with education to make our county a flagship

county for education, not just in the state of Nevada, but beyond her borders. We may not be able to change the rank of our state, but by making Douglas an even better stronger school system we can do what's best for our county and influence the state.

I also list government as a key issue. When the Legislature reconvenes in February they must cut 50 percent of the state budget and I see that a significant portion of this will fall to the county in both revenue taken and services passed down to fulfill. We need leadership that knows and understands the issues and knows how to deal with the legislature and has experience in doing so. I have that experience.

What have you done to help Douglas County be a better community?

I have spent my time in Douglas County giving back to the community as both a volunteer and participating with many nonprofit organizations. Prior to my work as an engineer and working with GE, I was spent years working as a youth minister and teacher to high school students and I have always been very involved in working with communities. I believe that you lead from your head, but you run for office because of your heart. In order to be an effective public servant you must care as well as lead and that is the make-up of who I am. I am involved in many aspects of the valley, both in the nonprofit sector and in the business sector by being on the Board of Directors for the Business Council. I work closely with the Nevada Commission on Economic Development and am also engaged in the Renewable Energy Task Force for the state. All of this experience can be leveraged in the county in providing expertise in business and leadership for our county.

I serve the community out of respect for its legacy and expectations for the future. I not only serve on several boards, this is my passion, this is who I am and this is who I will be as your county commissioner.

What boards, commissions, or other experience do you have?

I am currently involved with the following organizations:

Nevada Commission on Economic Development – Energy Technology Advisor

Northern Nevada Development Authority – Board of Directors

Workforce/Education Task Force – Chairman

Business Council of Douglas County – Executive Board, Vice President

Carson Valley Arts Council – Board of Directors

Douglas County Sheriff's Mounted Posse

Douglas County Sheriff's Advisory Council – Board of Directors

RAVE Foundation

Family Support Council

United Way

GE Volunteers

Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival

10,000 Kids Inc

Backcountry Horseman

Lifepoint Community Church

Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce

E. Clampus Vitus

Why should voters vote for you over someone else?

I am a problem solver, collaborator, leader, volunteer, and I

know how to get things done. In the past two years the world has changed, we can’t do things the same way we have done them. It will take someone who knows how to work with others, is a team player and can work to get measured results. We need a leader that understands where we need to go and also has a respect for the legacy of this great county. I feel I am that person.

Being employed by a global energy leader, I have experiences locally, nationally and internationally. And my career as an engineer and businessman, has given me tremendous fortitude, understanding of local and global problems. All of my professional experience will translate directly to the job I am running for.

What would you do to make the lake and valley more unified?

This is a goal many before me have had and not succeeded. When you look at what the county has in place currently, it has the appearance of being separate. We have two commission meetings in the two areas. Two sheriff locations. And when you add the natural barriers of the grade as well as the mountains and the high desert we have created and fostered this separation. The reason for this apparent separation was correct in spirit. The county wanted to respect and acknowledge that the lake was important enough to duplicate certain aspects of government. In the future we could examine having more joint meetings for the commission with both the lake and the valley in attendance at the same time and place.

BlueGo, the public transit, is mired in lawsuits and bankruptcy. Do we need public transit on the South Shore? If so, how do you propose to make it functional?:

Transportation is a key issue in any community and Douglas County is no exception. It’s unfortunate that issues with BlueGo are where they are. We need public transportation, but we also need to have our services pay for themselves. With

county revenues in a decline of the last four years, we simply cannot afford to do what we used to. We have to cut back and unfortunately that has affected transportation.

In the future we need to evaluate where the needs for transportation are. I see that as connecting the lake to the valley and also connecting Topaz with the valley. Let's meet with the groups and see what type of limited service is needed, establish a budget and work to find ways to make this happen. Unfortunately, we cannot afford everything and ultimately and any program needs to be self-sufficient.

What is your stance on the 100-room rule for gaming growth in the county?

Let me first mention that gaming growth is the toughest two words to use together right now. Gaming has been in a decline for 20 years and shame on us for not seeing this and diversifying our economy years ago. The problem we have is not the fault of gaming, it's the fault of us not being able to see around the corner that this was an issue long ago.

There are two issues at play here. First, a local valley business, Hamdogs, planned to expand and increase the number of gaming machines, which required a zoning change. Second, is the implementation of a rule designed to protect our local investment in the gaming industry.

Let me start by saying – we don't want 100 more rooms in Douglas County and for that reason alone I think it should not have been approved as written. If you want someone to make an investment in the area, there are other ways of doing this that would make more sense to the community. I don't want to see more hotel rooms here in our near future.

The 100-hotel room issue was designed to protect our casinos and protect the investments that are already here. While it's not connected to the local business Hamdogs, it is partly in response to them. If elected, I will inspire and nurture more

ideas, vetting of the possibilities, and will not jump to any one conclusion. I will do my homework, suggest more than one option or solution on these difficult issues and invest all the time needed to know all the pros and cons. As well, I will ensure that they are clearly explained to the public before I place any vote. This is not to be construed as delay and red tape tactics, but just the opposite … transparency and efficiency.

What bothers me about this issue, and I see both sides, is that we are a free enterprise system where capitalism is a part of what makes us who we are. To establish rules that stop capitalism and protect certain establishments is moving away from the principles that made us who we are as a country. Other countries do this, but it makes me cringe to see this happen in our own valley.

Think of it this way … suppose you want to open a pizza restaurant at the lake and the commissioners tell you that in order to open your pizza place you have to build a 5-mile asphalt bike path. What if the county commissioners required this because they think we have too many pizza parlors? And if we add more pizza parlors, it will make other pizza parlors suffer and close down. We essentially shut off free enterprise by requiring something that doesn't really connect to the issue at hand. (This is not to say that after eating pizza maybe we all need to bike that 5-mile route to get the pizza off.)

Consolidation of water agencies is stalled, yet ratepayers are faced with higher bills. What are your thoughts on this issue?

Some county ratepayers will now be asked to pay more for water than in property taxes. When you do this to people on fixed incomes in these economic times, I find to be unacceptable. We must find a better resolution to this issue.

When I see that the county paid $140,000 for a consultant and

allowed only one option to be returned, I have to look at the county for being the responsible party. As in any business, when you pay a consultant, you let them know what you want for that return. You will get what you agreed to and in our case – it was only one option, which was not a good option.

On the November ballot is an ordinance regarding the Minden airport. What is your position on it and why?

The airport is critical to Douglas County and is an important revenue stream for us of approximately $50 million according to past figures. I agree with the ordinance and believe that it is the best solution in order for us to continue to receive federal funding. The airport brings a tremendous amount of revenue to the county and in order for it to be self-sufficient we rely on the federal grants.

When I talk to those not in favor of the ordinance I see there is a bit of mistrust with the county and when you lose trust it's hard to gain it back. I would like to work with both groups to re-establish trust, address the concerns of the community and bring the groups together. I do, however, support the airport ordinance as it is written.

Is there any individual, group or organization you would not take campaign money from? Why?

Integrity and transparency are critical to me as both an individual, as a businessman and as a politician. I have no problem turning down contributions based on moral standards, pay to play scenarios and any organization I do not agree with.

Tell us something about yourself that voters don't already know:

Play guitar and sing

Love to cook

I’m on my horse as much as possible

Taught high school students for 14 years

Two patents for my work as an engineer in the global energy sector