

Nearly 80 apply to be South Lake Tahoe city manager



Publisher's note: *Updated May 18 at 9pm.*

By Kathryn Reed

About 80 people are interested in being the next city manager of South Lake Tahoe.

The deadline to apply was May 17, though resumes will be accepted by consultant Bob Murray and Associates if they are postmarked by that date.

Bob Murray would not say how many people he intends to refer to the City Council to interview.

"The only comment I'm going to have for the press is the number of candidates and I should have the accurate count (Wednesday)," he told *Lake Tahoe News* on Tuesday.

In the extremely brief and somewhat terse conversation, Murray said as of Sunday he had 64 applications. "I will not identify if there are local candidates. That is privileged information," the consultant quipped.

"Privileged" is an interesting response considering his fee comes from taxpayer money and the person to be hired will be working for the taxpayers at their expense.

This isn't the first time Murray has concealed information

from the public in relation to hiring a city manager. In 2002, he was hired as the headhunter when Dave Childs resigned.

Members of the community were chosen by city officials to interview a few of the candidates in what amounted to a closed session. When Dave Jinkens was chosen these people knew before the name was released to the public. What influence they may have had in the decision and who exactly they were remains a well kept secret.

Murray was also the consultant paid with taxpayer money after Kerry Miller resigned. He found Childs.

Transparency has been an often-used word at City Hall this year. With the history of this consultant, the view is already murky.

In April the council voted 3-2 to hire Murray again, this time for no more than \$15,000.

Mayor Kathay Lovell said she expects Murray to whittle the list to a dozen or so candidates. She said the final applicant number Murray told her is likely to be near 80.

On the other end of the spectrum is Councilman Jerry Birdwell who would like to look over all the resumes.

Lovell voted for Murray, Birdwell did not.

Lovell said a community panel would be assembled to give input into the process. How that will work has not been determined.

Current City Manager Jinkens told the council early this year he would be leaving when his contract expires in August. He started with the city in 2002.

Susan Wood contributed to this story.

DCSD offers superintendent job to Washoe County employee



By Kathryn Reed

Douglas County School District has a superintendent – assuming she accepts the position.

It took two votes Monday night for the board to unanimously agree Lisa Noonan should take the helm of the district. Noonan has also been interviewing in Michigan.

Board President Teri Jamin said a message was left for Noonan after the board's decision. Assuming she says yes, a contract will need to be negotiated as well as a start date. Ideally, Noonan would start by July 1, but her commitment to Washoe County School District is likely to be a factor.

Interim Superintendent John Soderman has indicated he would stay beyond his June 30 agreement. He has also said he would help mentor Noonan if the board so desired.

Noonan is chief academic officer in Washoe. She is two steps removed from the superintendent's job in Washoe.

One of the things that impressed Douglas board members during Noonan's in-depth interview last week was her approach in the mock coaching exercise.

"Everyone felt her strengths benefit us. Her management style

we felt is effective,” Jamin told *Lake Tahoe News*. “One of the things she discussed (in the exercise) was looking at the successful student who has graduated and where that student was at different levels in their educational career. She talked about working backward instead of just working on remediation of the unsuccessful student.”

The board has had several meetings in the last month trying to get a majority vote on one of the four finalists. The initial vote on May 17 at the Minden office was 6-1, with Tom Moore the lone no vote. His preference was David Jensen. On May 3 the board voted 4-3 not to hire him.

When a board member suggested the group vote again to make the decision unanimous, it became a 7-0 decision to hire Noonan.

The room was full Monday night, mostly with staff. No one from the public spoke.

Noonan has worked for four school districts in Nevada and California. She started her career in 1983 as an elementary schoolteacher.

She has a bachelor's from Humboldt State University, master's from San Diego State University and doctorate from UNR.

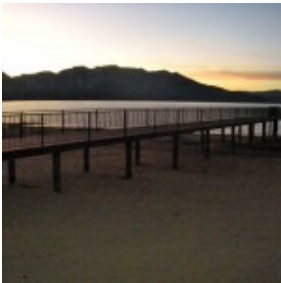
Noonan also has her private pilot's license. She is married, has three stepchildren and four grandchildren.

Tahoe on travelers' list of top places to visit

Lake Tahoe is tops among travelers for the second year in a row, so say the users of TripAdvisor, who ranked Lake Tahoe

the No. 2 U.S. destination for the 2010 TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Destinations Awards. Lake Tahoe was also ranked No. 8 in the country for Outdoor and Adventure.

"TripAdvisor is considered the world's largest travel community," Andy Chapman of the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association said in a press release. "To be ranked as a preferred destination in the country is an absolute honor, especially since this distinction comes from those that know Lake Tahoe the best, having experienced our product firsthand – the travelers."



Lake Tahoe continues to be a top destination.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards are based on the real and unbiased reviews and opinions from travelers on TripAdvisor.com. The winners were determined by a combination of travelers' destination comments, favorite places and overall destination popularity on TripAdvisor.

Lake Tahoe faced stiff local competition as one of the top five favorites in the U.S., with San Francisco taking the No. 1 spot and San Diego coming in at No. 3.

Lake Tahoe Basin lags in returning Census forms



By Kathryn Reed

Census workers will be out in force in Lake Tahoe this month because the number of people who returned forms by mail is lacking.

Throughout South Lake Tahoe 40 percent of the forms were returned. From Ski Run Boulevard to the state line that figure drops to 28 percent. That area of town has a number of Hispanic residents. People here illegally may be fearful of being turned in.

However, the U.S. Census Bureau keeps all information private, assuming any incriminating information is even obtained. In fact, Census workers can be fined \$250,000 or jailed for five years if they share information with another government entity or the police.

The reason all towns want an accurate Census count is that money from the federal government for certain services is based on population. Political boundaries are also drawn based on the numbers that are gathered every 10 years. Money goes toward education, adult education, job training, and other programs.

For Californians, any federal assistance may be even more critical in the near term. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Friday called for closing the \$20 billion deficit with cuts to

most social service programs.

“Aside from possibly losing out on federal funding, California is also in danger of losing a congressional seat because of low Census participation. The speculation as of now is that the seat will likely come from Northern California. We are about to lose a voice to fight for our rights, which is completely unacceptable,” Patty Diazm from Services, Immigrants Rights and Education Network, said in a statement.

The Census Bureau stopped receiving mailed responses at the end of April. Households that did not return their forms can expect to receive a visit from an enumerator this month. An enumerator is a Census Bureau worker who goes door-to-door to help households fill out the forms.

The enumerators will have official U.S. Census Bureau badges and may contact the households of those who did not fill out their Census forms up to six times.

The final count for the mail back response rate is: 72 percent nationally, 71 percent in California and Nevada in 69 percent.

The five counties in the Lake Tahoe Basin came in at: El Dorado 64 percent, Douglas 72 percent, Carson City 79 percent; Washoe 74 percent; and Placer 70 percent.

Nevada County, which includes Truckee, had 67 percent participation. Alpine County had 22 percent.

For more information, [click here](#).

Softball game ends with stabbing, arrest

A stabbing at a popular park in Gardnerville during a softball game sent one person to the hospital and another to jail.

On May 14 at approximately 9pm, deputies of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office arrived at Lampe Park. They found 26-year-old Brandon Robertson injured from a stab wound and separate slash wound to the chest.

He had been stabbed and cut by 20-year-old Brandon Brown, deputies said.

Robertson and Brown had been at the park playing in a softball game when they became involved in a dispute for unknown reasons.

Brown was transported to the DCSO Minden Jail where he was booked on charges of battery with a deadly weapon. His bail was been set at \$25,000.

Robertson was airlifted to Renown Medical Center in Reno.

Investigation continues into the history between Brown – a resident of the Dresslerville Indian Colony in Gardnerville – and Robertson – a resident of the Woodford's Indian Colony outside of Markleeville.

Mild mystery surrounds South

Tahoe road work

By Kathryn Reed

The sign says no parking for 48 hours. But it doesn't say when the time period starts or ends.

The photo was taken Friday afternoon and no one was near the equipment. Friday was not a furlough day for city staff. Road crews don't usually work weekends.

The equipment is parked on Harrison Avenue between San Francisco and Modesto avenues. This stretch of dirt is used for parking for the *Tahoe Daily Tribune* and Rojo's. In the winter it is a muddy mess with lots of holes. It almost necessitates 4-wheel drive to park there.



Dates and times would be helpful.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

The often-water filled indentation at the corner of Harrison and Modesto on the parcel the California Tahoe Conservancy owns has been filled in with rocks.

Calls to South Lake Tahoe officials to find out what is going on were not returned.

It's not known if this stretch of Harrison will be paved. The area is in the recently approved redevelopment area. Coverage

and erosion issues are major issues in this corridor.

Sales tax keeps Placerville financially solvent



By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

There's plenty of bustle on Placerville's Main Street, but it's a small-town kind of bustle, not the sort that suggests an economic giant.

Despite the quaintness of the old town, this city has the Sacramento region's highest per capita sales tax revenue – accomplished without the big new malls and auto centers of nearby economic behemoths Folsom and Roseville.

Based on a Bee analysis of sales tax revenue, Placerville's revenue for 2009-10 comes to \$280 for each man, woman and child in town.

Read the whole story

LTCC **eliminating** international program



By Kathryn Reed

All of the information about being an international student at Lake Tahoe Community College or studying abroad is still on the website, but the program no longer exists.

It will continue to be there, just changing a bit.

The college board of trustees this week eliminated the program as well as Jen Spina's job. The department ceases to exist after June 30.

However, LTCC students can study abroad through other colleges and earn credits. Instructors can also teach via other institutions.

Spina, who was not at Tuesday's meeting when decision was made, had given a presentation to the board earlier this year about her efforts to recruit international students. Although she went to where the would-be students are, they chose not to come to South Lake Tahoe.

Two students are signed up for fall quarter. Thirty are needed to make the program work.

The elimination of the program doesn't mean people from other countries can't come to LTCC. It means no one is promoting the college.

It wasn't about Spina; it was about economics.

“Jen Spina has done a phenomenal job,” said Diane Rosner, dean of instruction.

“It’s a matter of priorities,” Rosner explained.

With the state not paying community colleges for all of their full time students, LTCC chose to cut a program that essentially drains other resources. The students who go on the trips are counted in the full-time equation.

Cutting the program means being able to serve more students on campus with more academic-oriented instruction.

And although the study abroad program has been popular, like the trip to Chile this school year, it requires someone to oversee the program. With Spina’s job being axed, so too are those study opportunities.

“I look back and I’m proud of what we’ve done. It’s a sad time for me because I was one of the creators of the program,” Rosner said. “I think it will come back.”

The formal study abroad program started in 2001. Former Art Department Chairman David Foster had been taking students on international art related to art study programs before that.

If enough people sign up by the May 24 deadline, the Paris trip set for September will be honored. An ecological trip to Costa Rica in October is on the books, but Rosner said it looks likely it will be canceled.

Schwarzenegger **proposes**

ending state welfare

By Kevin Yamamura and Susan Ferriss, Sacramento Bee

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger asked lawmakers Friday to eliminate the state's welfare program starting in October and dramatically scale back in-home care for the elderly and disabled as part of his May budget revision to close a \$19.1 billion deficit.

The Republican governor also proposed cuts to state worker compensation. Besides asking for a 5 percent pay cut, 5 percent payroll cap and 5 percent increased pension contribution,



Arnold
Schwarzenegger

Schwarzenegger has proposed cutting one day per month of pay in exchange for leave credit.

Read the whole story

Democratic congressional

candidate targets McClintock

By Kathryn Reed

Clint Curtis doesn't want to make an issue of Tom McClintock living just outside the boundaries of the 4th Congressional District. Maybe that's because he moved to the Roseville area in January from Florida.

Curtis spent most of his time Wednesday night talking to the Lake Tahoe Democratic Club about how he intends to wrangle votes in what for decades has been a predominately Republican district.



Congressional
candidate

Clint Curtis
speaks in
South Lake
Tahoe on May
12.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

He has reached out to the other parties to build a coalition. His promise to them is if elected, they will have representation on his staff of eight in Washington. Curtis said the Libertarians and American Independent Party are on board.

"If you don't have the numbers, you don't win. We run as a

Democrat, but accept everyone else, too," Curtis told the 15 people gathered in the loft at Blue Angel Café.

Curtis is running unopposed in the June 8 primary on the Democratic ticket. Michael Babich is challenging McClintock on the Republican side. The general election is Nov. 2.

It wasn't until people started asking questions that Curtis offered any substance as to why voters might want to unseat the incumbent.

"(McClintock) doesn't bring any money to the district. We will bring money to the district," Curtis said.

He accused McClintock of leaving money on the table by not going after stimulus funds.

El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago asked Curtis what he thought the key issue facing the district is. To which he replied, "Water."

He is unequivocally opposed to the \$11 billion water bond on the November ballot because "it will misdirect water."

"Another issue that the bond does is gives water a price. The highest bidder can buy water," Curtis said. "It is essential we don't pass this."

What was not mentioned is the \$100 million in the bond that would go to the California Tahoe Conservancy and the \$75 million for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Those dollars would fund a good share of California's portion of environmental improvement projects tied to the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, which is winding its way through Congress.

Even though Santiago is on the CTC board, she didn't challenge Curtis on his position regarding the water bond.

Sandy Myron asked Curtis what his stance on immigration is.

"We have to protect our borders, but we can't breakup families," Curtis said. "I would move some military bases closer to the border."

To that, Bob Cliff pointed out the abundant military presence in San Diego and how that is not a deterrent.

"That's a ridiculous idea," Cliff told Curtis. "It would be a huge, huge expense."

Then the conversation turned to the need to crackdown on employers hiring illegal immigrants.

This isn't Curtis' first foray into politics. He lost to Tom Feeney in a Florida congressional race in 2006.

Curtis said he got interested in politics when he was working as a computer programmer and was asked to devise a system that could flip an election. He later testified before Congress about electronic voting equipment and how it can be manipulated.

On his platform is election reform so votes cast electronically can be verified.

The ballot has his occupation as computer programmer, though he just finished classes at McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento. He will take the California bar exam in July.

Curtis, 52, is married and has no children.