

SLT tells medical marijuana shop it must close



Cody Bass, right, with his attorney Henry Wykowski listen Dec. 13 to the South Lake Tahoe City Council deliberate. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

"I'm not going to shut down. I will fight to the Supreme Court."

That is what Cody Bass, founder and executive director of Tahoe Wellness Cooperative, told *Lake Tahoe News* after the South Lake Tahoe City Council today unanimously denied his appeal. Bass was appealing City Manager Nancy Kerry's ruling that he failed to submit a completed application to renew his permit to operate a medical marijuana collective.

This in essence means TWC is supposed to be out of business as of Dec. 14. His collective is the only place to get medical

marijuana on the South Shore.

Once the decision was made by the council on Tuesday afternoon, the packed house erupted in angry shouts that necessitated the police chief to usher them out of the room. TWC supporters were never allowed to speak on the record.

"I disagree with a lot of things that occurred today," Henry Wykowski, Bass' attorney, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I'm quite surprised by the outcome today."

Taking the city to court is the next likely action by Bass and his attorneys.

If Bass were to continue operating without a valid city permit, he could face a \$1,000/day fine. (Bass has 29 employees who receive a livable wage and health benefits. Their future is unknown.)

While the council took the black and white route Dec. 13 in following the medical marijuana ordinance, Bass' attorneys brought up several extenuating circumstances. City staff also added to a bit of the confusion by initiating the granting of various extensions to Bass to file his application.

The ordinance stipulates that dispensary operators must have the permission of the landlord. Bass obtained that signature in 2012 and 2014. He has not been able to secure that permission this time around.

Bass and the Olsons, who own the property, are now in litigation. Patty Olson has owned that commercial strip at the Bijou Center for years. Her son, Patrick, off and on has been given power of attorney. That has contributed to some of the issues – the Olsons don't always have a united voice.

Neither of the Olsons nor their attorney Bruce Grego was at the Dec. 13 council meeting even though City Attorney Tom Watson asked Grego to attend.

The lease between the Olsons and Bass goes through December 2017. In it there is the wording that the business to be operated at the site by Bass is a dispensary.

Wykowski and James Anthony, the second attorney representing Bass, argued the lease itself was sufficient permission from the property owners.

Wykowski said the Olsons are being “malicious” by not signing the city required paperwork. This is because Bass has taken the landlords to court for breach of contract in regards to his desire to purchase the property. A trial has been set for February to resolve that issue. Who owns the property will be the outcome of that legal dispute.

On a side note, Bass had also wanted to buy the Olson family home that is in the neighborhood. However, Bob Hassett, who runs the nearby Timber Cove Marina and owns an apartment complex in that area, has entered escrow on the house.

Hassett’s involvement with the Olsons is relevant because he wants to buy the commercial area, but not have TWC as a tenant.

Sass becomes mayor of South Lake Tahoe



Austin Sass

The leadership of the South Lake Tahoe City Council is essentially remaining the same for the next year.

Austin Sass and Wendy David swapped chairs on Dec. 13; so now Sass is mayor and David is mayor pro tem.

The five electeds have the responsibility to decide among themselves who the mayor and mayor pro tem are. Each term is for one year.

Councilmembers Tom Davis and Brooke Laine also expressed interest in being mayor pro tem.

Laine and Jason Collin were sworn in as councilmembers for the next four years.

At a future meeting the five will decide who will be the city's representative on the various boards and committees.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Skier who died at Mt. Rose identified

The skier who died last weekend in an avalanche at Mt. Rose has been identified as Thomas Barker of Aptos.

The 64-year-old had hiked up to the chutes area of the Reno area resort on Dec. 10. As he skied into the area, going under the ropes in the closed area, he triggered the avalanche. His friend called 911.

The victim's body was recovered the following day.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Officials: Vote went 'went very, very smoothly' in Nev.

By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Nevada's 2016 election had a few hiccups, but it was overall a smooth, successful exercise in democracy, state and local election officials said Monday.

Despite pre-election chatter about hacking and rigged systems, "Everything went very, very smoothly" during the Nov. 8 vote, Wayne Thorley, elections deputy with the Secretary of State's Office, told the final meeting of Nevada's Election Task Force.

While the national conversation has turned in recent days to a CIA report that concluded Russia intervened in the election to help Republican President-elect Donald Trump, Thorley said there was no evidence of shenanigans at the voting booths in Nevada.

Read the whole story

Local governments can't collect taxes from online travel firms

By Maura Dolan and Hugo Martin, Los Angeles Times

In a loss for local governments, the California Supreme Court decided Monday that online travel companies such as Expedia Inc. are exempt from paying hotel occupancy taxes.

The ruling came in one of several lawsuits filed by California cities and counties against the online firms, including Hotwire Inc. and Priceline.com.

The local governments have been attempting to get the firms to pay hundreds of millions of dollars in back taxes.

Lawyers for the government argued the tax should be based on the total amount the companies collect from consumers, not the lower dollar figure the hotels receive. Cities and counties wanted the online sites to pay the difference.

[Read the whole story](#)

Northstar GM a veteran at ski resort



Nadia Guerriero is now vice president/general manager of Northstar.

Prior to taking the helm of the Truckee ski resort she was senior director of base area operations, village and events. Guerriero has been with Northstar since 2007.

Beth Howard, who had been GM for two years, is now COO at Beaver Creek.

“Northstar is an extraordinary mountain within the Vail Resorts family with countless opportunities. I’m excited to work closer with our incredible talent across the mountain and help take the team and the resort to the next level,” Guerriero said in a statement.

LTCC board to mull building student housing

By Kathryn Reed

When Lake Tahoe Community College students start classes in fall 2020 they might have the option of living on campus.

This afternoon the college board will hear a presentation by representatives of Brailsford & Dunlavey about the feasibility of having residential housing at LTCC.

The company investigated what type of housing students would like on campus, if they even wanted it and then delved into

different scenarios to make it a reality.

While no decision will be made at the meeting today, which starts at 4:30pm, the board is expected to vote just after the first of the year about student housing.

“For the college to financially survive, being a destination college is the right concept. To be a destination college, housing is important,” LTCC President Kindred Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*.

About five years ago 17 percent of the students enrolled at LTCC were not from Tahoe. That percentage has grown to 41 percent.

Those students need someplace to call home while they are studying here. As the rental market has continued to be squeezed in the last several years, their options have dwindled. A survey found nearly 66 percent of the students had a difficult time attaining housing.

While student housing might be below market rate, it will only be for students. Specific criteria would need to be figured out if the board agrees to go forward with the housing idea. Taking a certain number of units each quarter may be required, and putting a limit on the number of years allowed in the student housing could be another rule.

The consultants believe housing for about 100 students would be do-able.

The dorms are proposed to go near the phys ed building and would likely be two stories. Depending on how many it would accommodate, the structure could also go near the new university center. The smell from the South Tahoe Public Utility District is a concern behind the gym.

Students told the consultants they don't need frills. What they want is something affordable, to be able to rent just for

the academic year and to have study spaces. They aren't looking for traditional apartments, but instead shared suites.

Food service is something else to be ironed out.

"We could reinstate food in the student center. I've seen some colleges provide food vouchers at the local businesses," Murillo said. "That helps local businesses and helps students get a good meal."

She said the most likely scenario is a developer will build the facility and a third party will operate it.

"We really have to look at the affordability for students. What would work cost-wise for them," Murillo said.

Implementing recreational pot rules won't tax Nev. budget

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY — Neither state regulators nor a lawmaker who pushed through Nevada's medical marijuana program in 2013 expect funding to be an issue as the state now moves into the realm of recreational pot sales.

While at least one other state is trying to figure out where to obtain startup funding for recreational marijuana sales, state Sen. Tick Segerblom, D-Las Vegas, said implementing it in Nevada won't cause financial problems for the state budget.

Nevada has money in its medical marijuana program that could be used for any upfront costs for recreational marijuana, such as licensing and inspections of the new dispensaries, he said.

Read the whole story

4-wheeler gets stuck in meadow by Angora



A driver got caught four-wheeling in a Tahoe meadow on Dec. 11. Photos/LTN

A recent transplant to the Lake Tahoe Basin learned the hard way where not to go four-wheeling.

The driver, whose name has not been released, got his Chevy

Blazer stuck Dec. 11 in the meadow by Angora on the South Shore.

With all the rain the area has received in the last week, it's like a bog there. The SUV had mud up to its axel.

The U.S. Forest Service cited the man for driving off a designated route. Heather Noel with the USFS said what he was deliberate.

The preliminary assessment is that there was not extensive damage done to the meadow, but the USFS will be looking at the area further.

"Driving or riding off designated routes on national forests can cause unacceptable resource damage to include vegetation and wildlife habitat destruction, soil erosion, and degraded streams," Noel told *Lake Tahoe News*. "By utilizing roads and trails designed for use through forests and grasslands, our natural resource communities are less likely to be stressed by recreational use."

— *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Northstar ski instructor dies at resort

A ski instructor at Northstar died at the resort on Sunday.

Dennis Baltimore, 35, of Kings Beach and co-workers were going down Village Run, which gets people back to the base, when a snowboarder lost control after hitting ice. Baltimore veered to his left, went through some trees and landed in a creek.

The snowboarder called 911.

Ski patrol and Northstar firefighters responded Dec. 11, but were unable to revive Baltimore. He was pronounced dead at the scene just after noon.

“Northstar California Resort, Northstar Ski Patrol and the entire Vail Resorts family extend our deepest sympathy and support to our employee’s family and friends; we are all devastated by the loss of this member of our team,” said Nadia Guerriero, Northstar’s vice president and general manager, said in a statement.

According to Placer County sheriff’s Sgt. Dave Hunt, the snowboarder is not likely to face charges.

“You are supposed to ski in control. You can be skiing in control, and hit ice which causes you to go out of control,” Hunt told *Lake Tahoe News*.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*