SLT, city manager brouhaha continues

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe City Council members on Feb. 20 will again discuss the future of City Manager Nancy Kerry.

The closed session item is listed as: public employee discipline/dismissal/release. This was the same wording used for the **Feb. 12 special meeting**. At that time there was no reportable action.

Sources have told *Lake Tahoe News* the city and Kerry are working on a settlement. She is owed nine month's severance if she were to be let go without cause. As with all employees, she would also be entitled to compensation for unused sick and vacation time.

Still, though, no one has come forward to say what has led the city and Kerry to be on a path to part ways.

On Feb. 6 Kerry was mandated to turn in her work phone and key card for access to city offices, though she is still technically the city manager. She is receiving her regular paycheck, but is not doing any work. She is not taking sick or vacation pay, nor is she on administrative leave.

"Nancy is currently on regular paid status," Debbie McIntyre, director of finance, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The Finance Department has received no direction from City Council regarding Nancy's pay status, and as such she will remain on paid status until direction is given. An exempt employee receives full pay whether or not they work full hours, and their pay doesn't change if they work more than full hours, just the nature of the exempt status employee."

Councilman Austin Sass has said people have complained about Kerry, but to what extent is not known. People complain about bosses and colleagues all the time. Councilman Tom Davis said no official complaints have been filed.

Lake Tahoe News on Feb. 8 asked the city: "How many complaints have been filed against each of the last three city managers? How many employee lawsuits have been filed against Kerry, O'Rourke and Jinkens? What was the outcome of them?" The city has not provided the answers.

Lake Tahoe News knows of **one former employee who filed a lawsuit** during Kerry's tenure, which was settled. There are no other known complaints. This speaks to why Kerry in her five-plus years as city manager had only received glowing reviews, including as recently as June 2017 when she was given a 5 percent raise.

Kerry's fall from grace comes with more questions than answers.

The relationship became strained once interim City Attorney Nira Doherty came on board.

The only thing known for sure is that **Mary Egan of Municipal Resource Group** came in last October to assess the culture of the city at the request of Sass, who was mayor at the time. Egan never provided the city with a written report. She talked about her findings in closed session Jan. 23.

Lake Tahoe News requested all correspondence with MRG prior to the contract signing as that would be public record. Suzie Alessi, the city clerk, handles all Public Records Act requests. Again, no response.

Alessi was resent a different PRA on Sunday, with acting City Manager Jeff Meston, Mayor Wendy David and Doherty copied on the email.

Alessi’s response to everyone about this reporter was, “I am really tired of feeling harassed and bullied by her.”

Again, Alessi is failing to do her job. As an elected official her boss is the people, no one at the city.

Flu vaccine 25% effective against worst strain

By Associated Press

The flu vaccine is doing a poor job protecting older Americans and others against the bug that’s causing most illnesses.

Preliminary figures released Thursday by the CDC suggest the vaccine is 36 percent effective overall in preventing flu illness severe enough to send a patient to the doctor’s office.

There’s only been one other time in the last decade when the flu vaccine did a worse job.

Read the whole story

Tree into South Lake home; no injuries



Firefighters rescue a cat from a home that was damaged Feb. 18 by a tree into the roof. Photo/SLTFD

Wicked wind on Sunday brought down a tree into a South Lake Tahoe residence.

No one in the duplex was injured. Even the cat was safely rescued by firefighters.

The two units on Tahoe Vista Drive, though, are uninhabitable. Vehicles were also severely damaged.

The National Weather Service in Reno recorded a gust on Feb. 18 of 56 mph at Lake Tahoe Airport.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Tahoe's state senator shelters accused harasser

By Melody Gutierrez, San Francisco Chroncile

SACRAMENTO – When the state Senate investigated sexual harassment allegations against a high-ranking legislative staffer three years ago, the house's handling appeared to be done quickly and decidedly. The staffer, Steve Davey, was placed on paid leave and ultimately resigned as chief of staff at the request of his boss, Republican Sen. Ted Gaines.



Ted Gaines

But Davey wasn't without a job. Gaines' campaign hired him immediately, even as the investigation continued, then kept him on after the allegations were substantiated. In fact, a Chronicle review of documents released this month by the Legislature and other public records show that legislative employees who were disciplined for sexual harassment, even those who were fired or forced to resign, often faced no long-term effects on their careers.

Some even came out ahead.

Read the whole story

Nevada adds another

apprenticeship program

By Nicole Raz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada is beginning to deliver on a promise to boost its workforce training programs.

The Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation – created by executive order in 2016 to manage and bolster training programs – said last July that it aims to boost the number of apprenticeship programs in the state by 10 percent within the next five years.

At the time, Nevada offered 78 state apprenticeship programs. As of Feb. 6, Nevada offers one more.

Read the whole story

Caesars to check 'do not disturb' rooms daily

By Wayne Parry, AP

One of the world's largest casino companies will check its guests' hotel rooms every 24 hours, even if they have a "Do Not Disturb" sign hanging on the doorknob.

Caesars Entertainment told the *Associated Press* it also is considering giving panic buttons to its employees to enable them to quickly summon help if they are in danger or feel threatened. The company will implement the new policy soon at all its properties worldwide, spokeswoman Noel Stevenson said.

The company, which owns 47 casinos in five countries – including Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Harveys – becomes the latest hospitality firm to adopt new room check policies after a gunman broke windows in his Las Vegas hotel room and rained bullets down on an outdoor concert in October, killing 58 people and injuring hundreds before killing himself.

Read the whole story

Wife guilty of assisting in murder of Placer deputy

By Associated Press

Jurors found a Utah woman guilty of murder Thursday for aiding her husband as he killed two Northern California sheriff's deputies in 2014.

The Sacramento County jury convicted Janelle Monroy of 10 charges including murder, attempted murder and carjacking, attempted carjacking and possessing an assault rifle. They rejected her argument that she feared Luis Bracamontes would have killed her if she didn't help him.

She faces a possible life sentence when she is sentenced March 23.

Prosecutors said she willingly moved his assault-style rifle from vehicle to stolen vehicle after he killed Sacramento County Deputy Danny Oliver and before he killed Placer County Detective Michael Davis Jr. hours later.

Read the whole story

Experts: Miracle March can’t save California

By Amy Graff, San Francisco Chronicle

Amid a winter marked by more sun than storms, California is desperate for rain and snow.

An end-of-winter burst of wet potent California storms, aka a Miracle March, is the only hope to bolster the Sierra Nevada snowpack and boost the rainfall totals, but meteorologists say the odds of this happening are almost none.

Even if a few wet weather systems sweep across the state in March, they’re unlikely to bump the state up to normal precipitation totals for the season.

“Once we get into late February, we’ll begin to have a better look at how the global patterns are setting up for March and then we’ll be able to talk a little more clearly about probability,” says Brian Garcia, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Monterey.

Read the whole story

Incline murder victim related

to suspect

The man who was killed last month in Incline Village has been identified as the father-in-law of the suspect.

David Rivas-Rodriguez, 70, died from multiple stab wounds, according to Washoe County sheriff's detectives.

Deputies were called to a residence in the 700 block of Southwood Boulevard at 10am Jan. 23. Rivas-Rodriguez was dead when they arrived.

The suspect is Ismeal Resendiz-Moreno. He is being held in the Washoe County Detention Facility on a charge of murder.

This is an ongoing investigation.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Brace yourself for more extreme weather

By Karen Kaplan, Los Angeles Times

Scientists have some sobering news about the future of our planet: Even if humans manage to meet the temperature target set forth in the Paris climate change agreement, record-breaking weather events will become increasingly common around the world.

And that's the good part.

The Paris plan seeks to keep Earth's global average temperature within 2 degrees Celsius of pre-industrial levels

by getting people to reduce their carbon emissions. According to the United Nations, 174 countries have signed on to the agreement.

However, the actual commitments made by these countries would probably allow the global average temperature to rise by as much as 3 degrees Celsius. In that case, extreme weather events would become much more commonplace almost everywhere on the planet.

Read the whole story