

South Tahoe council approves city manager's 3-year contract

By Kathryn Reed

Tony O'Rourke is set to begin his job as city manager of South Lake Tahoe on Aug. 9. The City Council on a 4-1 vote July 13 approved his contract.

O'Rourke, who left the meeting after the vote, will have a base salary of \$175,000 a year. He will receive \$500/month in a car allowance, two weeks of vacation, and the standard health and retirement package other city employees receive.



Mayor Kathay Lovell speaks with new City Manager Tony O'Rourke, right, and City Attorney Patrick Enright on July 13. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The city is offering up to \$12,000 to move him, his wife and

teenage son to Tahoe from Beaver Creek, Colo.

The contract is for three years. His first review will be after he's been on the job for six months.

Just like current City Manager Dave Jinkens' contract, this one comes with a nine-month severance clause if the council decides to dismiss O'Rourke. This is a fairly standard item in city manager contracts in California.

O'Rourke is subject to the two furlough days that are in place, which brings his salary closer to \$161,000. Those two days amount to a salary reduction of 9.23 percent for all city employees.

A third furlough day is likely to be part of the city's cost containment plan when the council approves the 2010-11 budget that will be effective Oct. 1.

What could balance out the third furlough day is the 4.62 percent cost of living adjustment the various city unions have negotiated that is supposed to begin Oct. 1. However, the city is currently negotiating with the various labor groups – with the COLA being one of the sticking points.

Although the city manager and city attorney positions are not part of any bargaining group, they follow in lockstep with the Administrative and Confidential group. So if the COLA is passed, those positions would get a bump in pay.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, the council voted 4-1 to extend City Attorney Patrick Enright's contract a year to 2012.

Councilman Bill Crawford was the dissenting vote both times.

Enright went up a step on the salary scale, increasing his wages by 5 percent. His severance provision was doubled to 180 days.