

El Dorado County's top official to retire in December

By Kathryn Reed

After a long day of budget battles, it was time for Gayle Erbe-Hamlin to strike one more name off the payroll – hers.

Erbe-Hamlin, chief administrative officer for El Dorado County, is resigning. Her last day will be Dec. 3.

“I’m 61. At some point you think about these things. When I originally accepted the CAO job, I said I would stay between two and three years,” Erbe-Hamlin told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Gayle Erbe-Hamlin

That was in July 2008. She kept her promise.

The Board of Supervisors’ next meeting is Dec. 6. In closed session they will decide how to go forward – interim director, acting director, hire a search firm? Terri Daly, the assistant CAO, has worked for the county since the summer. However, she was the CAO of Amador County before coming to El Dorado.

Although Erbe-Hamlin has had a short tenure as leader of this government system, she has worked for El Dorado County since 1985. She was director of the Public Health Department before being interim CAO, and eventually hired on as CAO.

Despite the nasty budget quagmires she has negotiated the county through in the past few years, it's keeping the county solvent that she is most proud of.

"There is never an end to what needs to be done. Part of me wishes I had the job when I was younger, but I'm not sure I would have had the maturity to manage it," Erbe-Hamlin said.

She describes the job of CAO a bit like being a shepherd – herding everyone in the same direction.

She believes the decisions the Board of Supervisors made Monday will bode well for the county as it goes forward. Still, she knows the state's \$29 billion hole will impact the county.

Erbe-Hamlin doesn't exactly get to retire. Yes, she'll turn in her keys to office in Placerville, but her husband has plenty of work for her. They own a bed and breakfast in Coloma.

"I go home and spend the night with 10 strangers," Erbe-Hamlin said. Soon she'll get to spend the days getting to know her guests.