

Businesses count SnowGlobe cash; concert divides locals

By Kathryn Reed

While the South Lake Tahoe City Council was prepared to get an earful from residents Tuesday about the three-day SnowGlobe Music Festival, only 10 people spoke during the public comment session about the concert.

The consensus from those folks is something has to be done about the sound level – the bass and subwoofer in particular. It shook walls and physically agitated people.



SnowGlobers -- about 10,000 strong each night -- line up at Lake Tahoe Community College to get in. Photo/LTN

Others said this town needs to bring in tourists and that events like SnowGlobe are good for the economy.

Some talked about moving the event off the campus of Lake Tahoe Community College. City officials and promoters considered all open spaces – including Lake Tahoe Airport.

With talks about SnowGlobe starting early last spring, that did not allow enough time to work with the FAA to stage the event at the airport.

City officials recognize that area, too, could impact a neighborhood.

The college's perspective is the event was successful, but that they would work on better trash containment in future years. Trails that locals use had litter on them. The college also wants to ensure the promoters end the event at the time specified.

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department cited the promoters after the second night when the concert ran long.

Representatives from both South Shore chambers of commerce were at the Jan. 3 meeting, saying they will be taking surveys of members and anyone who wants to participate.

South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce is asking people eight questions related to SnowGlobe's impact on businesses. Anyone may take survey.

The Nevada-based chamber is still putting its survey together.

Here are comments the city has received from area businesses:

- Richard Bennett, manager of Rite Aid, "SnowGlobe saved jobs. Sales were up 15 to 20 percent."
- Jim Warlow, owner Cork and More, "Very positive impact."
- Rude Brothers Bagels, "Best sales in 15 years."
- Tyler Cannon, owner of Sprouts, "Sales hit historic highs for the time period."
- Ross Stores manager, "Sales were huge."
- Sno-Flake Drive In, "SnowGlobe brought in a lot of

business.”

- Jazz Kat Cafe owner said she stayed open late once she saw SnowGlobers walked right by her door. She saw business at “completely unexpected volumes,” “slammed” and “sold out of items each day.”

- Freshies said sales were “huge.”

- Mike Donovan, MontBleu general manager, reported huge increases in business after 11pm when the after-parties began.

The city has a survey on its website, too. The majority, to date, want to bring the event back.

As for exact numbers, transient occupancy and sales taxes figures for December won't be available for a while. Those will be the two biggest indicators of how the area did financially. However, extrapolating the direct impact on the economy compared to a year ago when record snowfall brought people to the area will be more difficult.