

# Tahoe tourism agencies back Olympic effort with cash

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Lake Tahoe tourism agencies are doing their financial part to help bring the 2022 Winter Olympics to the region.

On Jan. 12 the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority allocated \$25,000 to the bid effort, with the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association having already committed the same amount. Each will be asked to put in another \$25,000 next year. (Board member Tom Davis was absent.)

Blaise Carrig, co-president of Vail Resorts mountain division, made a pitch to the LTVA board at the Thursday board meeting. Carrig, who the day before officially became a board member of the Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition, first worked with the team when he worked at Heavenly Mountain Resort.



Blaise Carrig

“It would be a really good legacy project for Reno-Tahoe,” Carrig told the LTVA. “It would bring national and international recognition to the marketplace that Reno-Tahoe could use.”

It will take more than \$1 million to put the bid together, so the tourism agencies’ checks are just a start. Nevada has

pledged money. Private and public entities are being asked to be part of the process.

The bid would have to be ready to be presented to the U.S. Olympic Committee by March 2013, summer at the latest. The International Olympic Committee picks the host city in 2015. That gives the city and/or region seven years to get everything together.

“When Salt Lake City was awarded the bid, in those seven years it went from 25th to No. 1 for getting funding for infrastructure,” LTVA board member Nancy McDermid said. “This would be one way in seven years to get infrastructure we haven’t had.”

Roads, transit and venues are all things that would come to the region.

Carrig said venues have been scoped out, but nothing is solidified. Earlier he told *Lake Tahoe News* it is possible Heavenly could create a new run to accommodate the men’s downhill.

Without being able to accommodate that event, sources have told *Lake Tahoe News*, no area can host a Winter Games.

Carrig assured the LTVA board the South Shore would be part of the Olympics.

He said the international committee looks for bids that are compact. In large part this has to do with the media and how they cover the Games.

While Sacramento was brought up, Carrig sees it more as a gateway to Tahoe-Reno, than a venue site. But with a large arena, having ice events there has not been ruled out. Reno doesn’t have a single sheet of ice. The South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena in the past has been talked about as a training area. It has no seating to accommodate anything close to an Olympic

event. The next nearest ice is in San Jose where the Sharks play. But the Cow Palace in San Francisco and Oakland arena have had skating events before.

McDermid also questioned Carrig about whether environmental groups had been approached. He said Nevada Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki, who is heading up the Tahoe-Reno coalition, has started those talks.

“Part of the bid is what is the environmental legacy,” Carrig said.

“Legacy projects” is a phrase often heard when discussing Olympic bids. It’s what a community is left with after the two weeks. It could be roads, a stadium or less sediment reaching Lake Tahoe. The theory is those legacies would be viewed as a positive by and for the community.