

South Tahoe finance director taking job in Douglas County

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe Finance Director Christine Vuletich is leaving in two weeks to take a job in Douglas County.

She was hired in September 2004 by then City Manager Dave Jinkens to replace the retiring Bruce Budman. She is leaving to be assistant county manager/chief financial officer for Douglas County.

Vuletich, 52, told *Lake Tahoe News* she is looking forward to the challenges ahead of her with having more responsibility.

“It’s been a great experience working for the city of South Lake Tahoe. We’ve been through a lot of challenging times,” Vuletich said. “I’ve had wonderful people to work with. There are very talented people here, but I’m ready for new challenges.”



Christine
Vuletich

Her last day in South Lake is Feb. 17. Her first day in Douglas County is Feb. 27. Normally people at this level give their boss at least 30 days notice. Not in this case.

Vuletich’s relationship with her bosses has been tenuous at times. This council and previous city councils have had

difficulty in getting straight answers from her regarding finances. The same has been true for *Lake Tahoe News*.

At the council meeting earlier this week regarding redevelopment she wasn't even the one to address the council regarding all of the financing involved in the decisions being made.

As assistant county manager, her job will be even greater and more diverse than it is in South Tahoe.

Vuletich started in South Lake Tahoe with a salary of \$69,000 a year. She is leaving with the pay between \$117,240.03 and \$142,512.24. The 2011-12 budget is not on the city's website, so *Lake Tahoe News* could not find her actual salary. She will be making \$109,000 in Douglas County. All staff there took a 5 percent cut in pay for this fiscal year which began July 1, so it's possible that could be reinstated in the summer. Negotiations with Douglas County bargaining units are just beginning and managers usually get the same increase or cut as the case may be.

Douglas County Manager Steve Mokrohisky told *Lake Tahoe News*, "(Vuletich) is dynamic. She will be a great fit for Douglas County."

Vuletich was one of five finalists for the job. Mokrohisky said everyone in South Tahoe spoke highly of her. However, he said no current or former councilmembers were interviewed.

Douglas County has been without an assistant county manager since July when Mokrohisky took over for Michael Brown who moved to Oregon. And it has not had a finance director in more than a year. With two unsuccessful national searches for a finance director, Mokrohisky decided a different approach was needed. Combining the positions into one also saves the county \$120,000 a year.

Vuletich will be responsible for Douglas County's 2011-12 \$120

million budget. South Lake Tahoe's budget this fiscal year is \$94.7 million. Taking a job in Minden means Vuletich's commute will only be 10 minutes.

City Manager Tony O'Rourke is evaluating his options. Next week he expects to name an interim finance director. After 60 to 90 days a decision will be made as to whether that person is right for the job or if a search beyond the confines of city staff should be conducted. O'Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News* it's also possible the department could be reorganized.