

# Opinion: O'Rourke is in breach of contract

To the community,

There is a lot of noise buzzing around the city manager's search for a new employer. So, for the record, the vote to hire Mr. (Tony) O'Rourke as South Tahoe's city manager was 4-1. I cast the lone no vote. But I should back up and explain why I did not take part in the interview process for selecting a city manager.

The process was tainted from the beginning because the field to be interviewed had been reduced to just two candidates, O'Rourke and another candidate. The City Council had selected four to be interviewed. Before the process started two dropped out. At that point, I phoned Mayor (Kathay) Lovell and told her that the list was too short and that the council should open the selection process again. The mayor said no to my request; there would only be two to be interviewed. Because of her response I bowed out. To me it was clear that O'Rourke had a lock on the job because when the council learned that O'Rourke was from Beaver Creek, the glow of Vail lit up the face of more than one councilmember.



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As said, the above is by gone. History. Presently, after less than two years, O'Rourke is searching for a new job and it is reported that he has been offered a city manager's job in

Washington state. If he doesn't take that job, I believe he will be in breach of contract with the city of South Lake Tahoe. Clearly, he hasn't any intention of fulfilling the contract with the city. I think the claim of breach is solid, that he can be fired without collecting a basket full of dough.

From the beginning, the selection process for hiring O'Rourke lacked integrity. It was incomplete. The bias was there and clear. And now the joke is on the city. Also, it is clear that O'Rourke falls short of having integrity. But in fairness to O'Rourke, the City Council majority got what it ordered.

### **Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe**

PS: If according to the current mayor and council O'Rourke is the real deal – good as gold – why are they prepared to release him from his contract?