

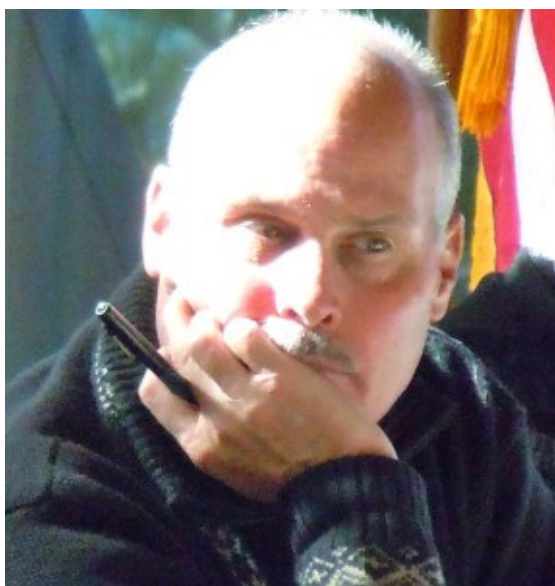
South Tahoe city manager offered job in Washington

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe City Manager Tony O'Rourke has been offered the same job in Yakima, Wash.

O'Rourke, who signed a three-year contract with South Tahoe that started in August 2010, told *Lake Tahoe News* he will take the weekend to decide about what to do regarding the job offer. He expects to make a decision early next week.

The Yakima City Council voted 7-0 on April 27 to hire O'Rourke.



South Lake Tahoe City Manager Tony O'Rourke has been offered a job in Washington. Photo/LTN

Still to be negotiated are the terms of the contract. It is possible if wages and benefits don't meet O'Rourke's liking, he could turn down the offer.

He said he would be talking with South Lake Tahoe's council this weekend, too.

"A decision will be made soon. I want to be fair to both parties," O'Rourke said.

There is no penalty per his contract if he leaves South Lake Tahoe early. He is "supposed" to give 90-days notice, but it is entirely up to the council when it would let him out of the contract.

However, on the flip side, had the council wanted to fire O'Rourke, he would have been entitled to nine months severance pay – 50 percent more than former City Manager Dave Jinkens had in his contract.

O'Rourke, 57, has been looking for another job for several months.

Earlier this month he told *Lake Tahoe News*, "For the long term I need to find a solution to this personal issue."

While he has been a lightning rod in his short tenure in South Lake Tahoe, the council has had his back, collectively agreeing he has done what the city needed.

Nancy Kerry, who earlier this month was officially given the title that puts her second in command and the top city official when O'Rourke is out of town, on Friday night told *Lake Tahoe News* it would be inappropriate to speak about O'Rourke's job offer until she had spoken with him and the council.

Mayor Claire Fortier, who also was not aware of the O'Rourke's job offer until *Lake Tahoe News* called, said, "South Lake Tahoe will be fine. Tony has created a very strong senior management team that is very capable of filling the void until we have the next city manager."

O'Rourke echoed that sentiment.

“We really have an outstanding senior staff,” O’Rourke said.

For the council and city as a whole, he said, “What they need now is more civility and consistency. The heavy lifting has been done.”