

O'Rourke packing bags for Washington

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe City Manager Tony O'Rourke expects to be on the city's payroll through July 1, with his first day as city manager of Yakima, Wash., the following day.

"It's difficult to depart, but I'm looking forward to the opportunities and challenges," O'Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Tony O'Rourke

The Yakima council on May 8 voted 5-1 to approve O'Rourke's contract. He will be making \$175,000 – the same salary he has in Tahoe.

According to the *Yakima Herald-Republic*, the councilman who voted no to the contract supports O'Rourke, just not the six months of severance pay he would get if voters approve a switch to a strong mayor form of government. O'Rourke had a nine month severance clause in his contract here.

O'Rourke said he has vacation time left on the books so it's possible he will not be at his desk through June.

At the May 15 City Council meeting the Tahoe electeds are expected to appoint an interim city manager and discuss the recruitment process for a permanent leader.

“The headhunter approach has been put out there, but I’m not sure that’s the best way, but I also don’t know,” Mayor Claire Fortier told *Lake Tahoe News*.

She said the discussion next Tuesday will be in open session. Fortier said the council wants someone on board sooner rather than later.

Another component to the hiring is that the terms for Councilmen Bruce Grego and Hal Cole are up in December after the Nov. 6 election. Grego has indicated he plans to seek another term, while Cole has not decided.