

Bid docs force STPUD to delay water line work

Publisher's note: *This is one of a few stories about construction planned for the Lake Tahoe Basin this summer.*

By Kathryn Reed

Inadequate bids are forcing the state streets water project in South Lake Tahoe to be delayed for what will probably be at least until 2014.

While it's possible the South Tahoe Public Utility District board and staff could decide to do some of the work this building season, it's doubtful. At a meeting last week the board agreed with staff that it was best to reject all bids. (Board member Kelly Sheehan was absent.)

Two of the three bids did not adequately comply with the disadvantaged business enterprises clause that requires the general contractor to contact a certain class of subcontractor. It doesn't say they have to hire them, just reach out to see if they could do the work.



The third bid was \$1 million higher than the other two.

“In all of our bid documents its says we reserve right to withdraw the bid. That is basically what happened,” South Tahoe PUD spokesman Dennis Cocking told *Lake Tahoe News* after the meeting.

It is possible STPUD crews could work on some of the area this summer, but that is dependent on where crews are needed for everyday work.

With the city pushing back its overlay project in this area to probably 2015, the water district is not feeling the pressure to get its work done this season.

What will be done at some point is putting in a 12-inch water line down Tahoe Keys Boulevard. The side streets – known as the state streets because most are named after a state – are to have 8- and 10-inch water lines installed. Most of what is in the ground is 6-inch lines.

Hydrants will also be installed at 500-foot intervals for better fire protection.

Where there are dead-end lines, those will be converted to loops. When the South Shore was full of tiny water districts the norm was to cap a water line. Now standard practice is to have the system loop, which provides for better water quality.

One aspect of the project that was included in the bid documents was work on Pioneer Trail. That is still going to be done this summer, but now by district employees.

“We knew we couldn’t go out to bid again and get it done this year,” Cocking said.

Timing is critical to replace that undersized water line before the city begins its sidewalk project in the same location.

It’s likely water will be shut off for a time in that area. Water customers will be notified 24 hours in advance.