

# Paid beach parking in S. Tahoe is a done deal

By Kathryn Reed

No longer can opponents to South Lake Tahoe's expansion of metered parking point to Truckee as an example of a town that continuously loses money with paid parking.

Truckee is projected to net \$140,000 this fiscal year that ends June 30. And the town council this month agreed – unanimously – to keep the program intact.

South Lake Tahoe on a 4-1 vote May 21, with Mayor Tom Davis dissenting, made what is expected to be the last tweak to its parking plan for this summer season.

The vote was to install the parking kiosks at the two lots serving Lakeview Commons and not put them in at Regan Beach.



A pilot parking meter program started in 2011 on Bellamy Court in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN file

At previous meetings it was agreed meters will go in at Venice Drive, with operation being seasonal during the warm months; and year-round near Lakeside Beach in the state line area.

“Everyone knows my position on paid parking. I hate it,” Davis said. He said in the fall he hopes it will have not been a success so he can be the first to make a motion to abandon the whole thing, and perhaps then the city can resell the used kiosks.

Councilmember Hal Cole said, “I’m a big believer in user fees. I think the people using it should fund it.”

Councilwoman Brooke Laine pointed out how the U.S. Forest Service charges at all of its beaches in the basin except for Kiva. She tied this to the city’s having paid parking at its beaches except Regan and Timber Cove.

State Parks is asking for \$10 at the lot at Vikingsholm – and that could be for a 10-minute visit.

The city is going to charge \$2 per hour, with a maximum of \$10 per day.

Paid parking has been talked about for three years. In the past year, those against the concept have come out in large numbers to oppose the plan. However, at Tuesday’s City Council meeting, only four spoke – all against paid parking.

The council intends to assess in the fall how the program worked – or didn’t.

#### **In other action:**

- The council agreed to Tom Watson’s three-year contract. The city attorney starts July 8. He will make \$154,000 per year, receive the same benefits as other city staff, and be given up to \$7,500 in moving expenses. If the council wants to terminate him before the contract expires June 30, 2016, he will be paid six-months severance.

- Deputy City Attorney Nira Feeley will be the interim city attorney from June 1-July 7.

- Tom Greene with the Tahoe Prosperity Center updated the council on that group's plan to bring broadband to the Lake Tahoe Basin.
- It was agreed in the near future the council would discuss the possibility of going to voters to seek a raise in the snow removal fee that currently stands at \$20/year. That money is for equipment. Tying increases to the Consumer Price Index will also be broached.
- There will be a special council meeting May 30 at 4pm regarding the Bijou erosion project.
- Depending on the action taken Thursday by the Planning Commission, the Chateau project may be on the June 11 council agenda.
- A special council meeting may be needed in June regarding the area plan for the tourist core.