

SnowGlobe returning to S. Tahoe in December

By Kathryn Reed

SnowGlobe, the three-day outdoor music festival in South Lake Tahoe, is coming back.

The City Council on Tuesday approved the agreement for the event to return Dec. 29-31. But this third year is most likely the last time it will be at the ball fields next to Lake Tahoe Community College.

While Chad Donnelly, who produces the event, is going to put heavy mats on the high-traffic areas, he said it's cost-prohibitive (\$800,000) to cover the entire field. That field was paid for by taxpayer dollars through Measure S/R. And with the city wanting to preserve the integrity of the field as long as possible, City Manager Nancy Kerry is recommending "it never come back to this location."



SnowGlobe will return to South Lake Tahoe for the third year over New Year's Eve weekend. Photo/LTN file

The thinking is that by telling Donnelly now that he has to find a new location for 2014, that a location on the South

Shore will be found.

Horizon had considered having it. The North Shore expressed strong interest when Donnelly started fishing around for cash to come back. But the South Shore always wanted it. It's all about money.

The Aug. 6 staff report says, "An overall economic impact analysis was provided by a consultant contracted by SnowGlobe, which estimated the direct economic benefits to South Lake Tahoe community at \$5.8 million." Strategic Marketing Group then analyzed those findings, saying the consultant should have included indirect economic impacts, too, which would bring the financial benefit of SnowGlobe to between \$11 million and \$14 million.

Jack Fisher, general manager at MontBleu casino, told the council he thought \$10 million was "a little light". His casino has had multiple after parties that have been popular with SnowGlobe attendees.

He broached the possibility of having SnowGlobe at multiple locations in the future.

On the Aug. 8 Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority board meeting agenda is an item to allocate up to \$75,000 to the producer of SnowGlobe. The board opted earlier not to vote on the funding until a location on the South Shore had been secured.

Lake Tahoe Community College in April had directed staff to negotiate a multiyear contract with Donnelly. But that won't be necessary with the city's not wanting to subject the field to an event like SnowGlobe. The college board, though, will have an item about SnowGlobe on its Aug. 13 agenda.

Donnelly will be responsible for cleaning the field once the snow melts. Under consideration is adding warming huts by the line for buses and near food vendors.

He must put up a \$25,000 deposit.

The city is going to absorb about \$25,000 in soft costs, which includes time for police and parks and rec staff.

The city believes that \$25,000 is an investment in the event with a return many times over via hotel and sales tax revenue generated from concert-goers.