

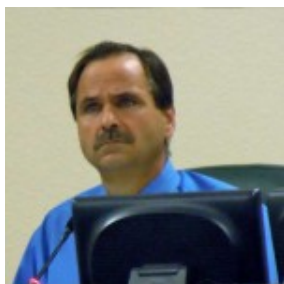
Nutting pleads not guilty; trial set for Feb.

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County Supervisor Ray Nutting pleaded not guilty to all charges Friday in El Dorado County Superior Court in South Lake Tahoe.

Nutting, 53, faces four felony counts regarding more than \$70,000 he received from the state to clear brush from his 350-acre ranch in Somerset. (His brother owns an adjacent 350 acres.) He is accused of not reporting the income, voting on contracts that affected him financially and perjury. After those felony charges were leveled in May, the district and state attorneys general offices filed seven misdemeanor charges against Nutting regarding how he got his \$55,000 in bail money. He is accused of taking loans from county employees.

On Sept. 20, Judge Tim Buckley denied the motions to dismiss the charges, as Nutting's attorney David Weiner had requested.



Ray Nutting

"No surprises here," Nutting told *Lake Tahoe News* as he left the courtroom. He directed further questions to his attorney.

"(The judge) said the standard was reasonable suspicion. It's the lowest of all standards. Anything lower is a mere guess,"

Weiner told *Lake Tahoe News* after the hearing.

Weiner has a matter of days to file an appeal to Buckley's decision regarding the felony counts. He would not say if he intends to go that route.

After the judge rendered his decisions on the motions to dismiss he asked Nutting to enter a plea to all charges. To which Nutting pleaded not guilty.

Buckley had no trouble concluding three of the four counts should proceed to trial, but count two troubled him. This involves the nearly \$72,000 Nutting received from the Sierra Coordinated Resource Management Council in 2009 that he attempted to report 4½ years after the fact.

Buckley said the grand jury that leveled the indictment against Nutting was not properly instructed and that because those 18 people had been disbanded without being told not to talk about the case it would be impossible to reconvene them to reconsider that specific count.

Assistant District Attorney James Clinchard said he would not issue any comment about the case. He is trying the case with Deputy Attorney General Peter Williams.

Nutting represents the southern part of El Dorado County, including parts of El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park, Pleasant Valley, Somerset and Grizzly Flat. In the courtroom were his wife, family members, friends and constituents.

Weiner believes the accusations are politically motivated and that the grand jury was "misled by inaccurate, incomplete and prejudiced information."

"We are looking forward to a jury trial to present the truth," Weiner said.

The trial is slated to begin Feb. 4 in Placerville. Jury selection could take a week and the trial two weeks.