

Piper: 'Attract businesses that have higher paying jobs'



Teresa Piper

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News asked the six El Dorado County supervisor candidates a series of questions. All are the same except for one that is specific to each candidate. The responses are being run in the order they were received by LTN. One candidate chose not to answer the questions.*

Name: Teresa Piper

Age: 51

Occupation: Customer service and accounting

Education: Majored in business and accounting, Los Rios Community College campuses

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?: President/recreation director for Gold Ridge Forest Homeowners Association; treasurer for El Dorado Nordic Ski Patrol; president of the El Dorado County Republican Woman Federated; and member of Golden State United Food and Commercial Workers 8.

Traffic is horrible on Fridays and Sundays throughout the

county. Will you commit to not voting for any big subdivisions unless there is a plan to widen Highway 50? Why or why not?:

U.S. Highway 50 is maintained by Caltrans. This is not in the El Dorado County supervisors' control to commit to widening Highway 50 or any modification for that matter. Since the community of Placerville supported the current configuration of Highway 50's realignment versus a cut and cover option, the bottlenecks at the three traffic signals are unavoidable. The 20-year plan to correct the seasonal bottleneck in the Camino area needs to be implemented not just for traffic flow but to save lives. The special interests that have been in the way need to be exposed and let this plan progress. I believe we are still the only county that provides a fee per unit at development for traffic mitigation. As a county supervisor, I would vote on any development and project that has been approved by the Planning and Development Department, passed by the Planning Commission, and has met all requirements and complies with the General Plan.

What is your opinion on a proposed November initiative to control growth?: I am personally in favor of the petitions that are designed to keep our zoning in alignment with the land use designations of the county's General Plan and protect the county's resources, fix community regional lines.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?: Lake Tahoe struggles to maintain itself as a city let alone trying to take on the unincorporated areas and eliminate the support services from the county.

What entities would you not take money from?: I would not accept money from any entity or individual that expects something in return.

What would you do to boost the economy?: Attract businesses to relocate here that have higher paying jobs. We don't need fast food or any more minimum wage. We need more businesses like an Internet based business or a Blue Shield Campus. There are

companies looking to relocate out of the Bay Area and Silicon Valley due to extremely high overhead and housing costs.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 5 and how do you propose to resolve it?: The biggest issue for the whole county is the economy, with it being most evident in District 5 since this district relies so heavily on the tourist dollar. When the economy shrinks, the entertainment dollar becomes the least significant in the family budget. We need District 5 to begin supporting itself on the local economy, (as I stated in answer 10) with better paying jobs. Then there would be more residents to build the tax base, and our tourism dollars can become a bonus in good times.

Supervisors meet only once a year in Lake Tahoe. Do you believe this is fair representation? Why or why not?: I would work hard to have the BOS meet in Lake Tahoe two or three times during the good weather months. Right now, most Tahoe residents have no way to participate in BOS meetings, planning meetings, etc. Lake Tahoe has become marginalized.

Would you have voted for Red Hawk to be built and to divert Caltrans funds for interchanges? Those decisions are still negatively affecting the South Shore. Is there anything you would do to change the status quo?: Lake Tahoe casino traffic was failing badly at Lake Tahoe before Red Hawk was built. Online gambling has to be a big part of that. People don't even have to leave home to gamble. Las Vegas has managed fairly well with a bad economy by strongly emphasizing family activities and resorts. Look at the big Embassy Suites complex right below Harrah's. They are packed all the time due to family-friendly food and activities.

Would you support having more tax dollars from the county coming to the South Shore? Currently, more dollars leave the basin than come back.: As long as there is a gambling area, you will have a lot of transient and low wage workers who take more from the infrastructure than they contribute. Sports of

various kinds could be pushed really hard, especially in the Meyers area – cross country skiing, X-Treme sports, ice skating, indoor training facilities and things like Squaw Valley only on a smaller scale. Attract families and sportsmen who have money to spend on more pricey sports. How about more charity golf tournaments and sports challenges? Initially, more dollars would have to come from other parts of the county, but I think with proper marketing the return on investment would be reasonably quick.

The county and city of South Lake Tahoe have a long history of not getting along. How would you propose to improve the relationship?: Communication is always the key to any relationships success.

What is your vision for Meyers and how will you make it a reality?: Make Meyers the center of very varied sporting opportunities. Push it as a destination in itself. It doesn't seem to have much of an identity outside the area and needs some good marketing as a "getaway" that isn't too expensive for the sports-minded family. Meyers could also be the center of small manufacturing businesses that are related to sports. Craftsmen employees would be at a wage level where they could afford nice housing and not be an even bigger draw on services. What Meyers doesn't need is to pay \$20,000 in consulting fees.

Why should someone vote for you over someone else?: I am the candidate with a plan and passion to implement the plan. I will not just be the third vote. I have a home in Tahoe as well as Pollock Pines and I am deeply invested in both communities.

How do you expect to work with the current board, in particular with Supervisor Ray Nutting since you have accused him of threatening you?: I will work with the whole board in a respectful and professional manner.

What do you do for fun?: I participate and enjoy all of the outdoor activities that my district offers.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: In 2008, I worked with the local committee in Pollock Pines where residents and business owners defeated the proposed homeless shelter. We didn't defeat the shelter just because it was going to be in our backyard. The grant proposal, which I read, benefited the landowner and did nothing to solve the county's homeless problem. After five years, the landowner could evict the shelter and benefit from the millions of dollars in improvements with no pay back. This is one example of getting involved and working to better my community. I am committed to making District 5 be all that it can be.